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SHORT STORIES

SHORT STORIES

FOR

SCHOOL AND HOME READING

AND FOR REPRODUCTION AS EXERCISES IN COMPOSITION,
UNDER THE CODES OF EDUCATION

SECOND SERIES



W. & R. CHAMBERS LONDON AND EDINBURGH 1876

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ENGLISH AND SCOTCH CODES, 1876.

STANDARD V.

'Writing from memory the substance of a short story or narrative read out twice by the Inspector; spelling, grammar, and handwriting to be considered.'



PREFACE.

This work has been prepared with the same aim as the First' Series, of which it may be regarded as a continuation, although the stories are for the most part somewhat shorter. The book contains upwards of a hundred and fifty stories varying in length and degree of difficulty, and intended to be reproduced as exercises in composition by the pupils to whom they have been read.

Those containing narrative simply will be found easier for beginners, who generally find a difficulty in reproducing dialogue.

The following extract from the Examiners' Report on one of our Secondary Schools will shew that this kind of exercise may be advantageously practised even there: 'As an exercise in composition, a story was told to them, which the class reproduced on paper. This was done creditably by one-fourth, fairly by one-fourth, and poorly by one-half of the class. Their knowledge of grammar under oral examination led us to expect greater accuracy in the written exercise. They have probably not had

much experience in practical composition—a subject which might be profitably encouraged.'

These stories may be used in many other ways. When read slowly or told orally to younger children, they will be found useful in arresting the attention and relieving the tedium of ordinary tasks. A few pointed questions will bring out whether the story has been understood: and in this way the intelligence of the pupils will be drawn out, and their knowledge of the use of words extended.

SHORT STORIES.

SECOND SERIES.

A TROUBLESOME SWORD.

An officer, when sitting in the theatre, kept constantly fidgeting about, so that his sword got entangled in the legs of those who sat beside him. 'Sir,' said a gentleman near him, in an angry tone, 'your sword annoys me.' 'Very likely,' returned the officer: 'I believe it has annoyed a good many besides you, but perhaps in a more serious fashion.'

A STRANGE WAGER.

As a witty Frenchman, on an old broken-down horse, was crossing one of the bridges over the Seine, he met a cavalry officer riding a beautiful steed. 'I will bet you ten louis,' said the wit, 'that I will make my horse do what yours won't do.' 'Well,' said the officer, 'I accept the wager.' Dismounting, the stranger pushed his horse over into the river. The gentleman, confounded at this method of making money out of a useless horse, had in honour to pay the bet.

A COOL RETORT.

A gentleman, who had gone to a ball, danced so indifferently that all the company laughed at his performance. Being angry at having made himself a laughing-stock, he turned round to a person near him, and said: 'Although I dance indifferently, I can fight well.' 'Then, sir,' replied the other, 'I would advise you always to fight, and never to dance.'

DICKY'S CAPTURE.

The door of a bird's cage had been left open by accident. The pet canary flew out, and at once made for the outside door, which happened to be open. The cat, however, immediately gave chase, and captured the bird in the lobby. Instead of devouring poor Dicky, Tom at once returned and placed the frightened bird at his mistress's feet. The lady took it up, and replaced it in the cage, none the worse of its sudden seizure.

GOING TO DIE.

A grenadier in a French regiment was mortally wounded when charging the enemy. He fell out of the ranks, and retired to the rear of his company. As he passed, his captain cried: 'Where is that grenadier going?' Resenting the idea of being suspected of cowardice, the brave soldier turned round, and saluted his officer, saying: 'I am going to die, captain.' No sooner had he uttered these words, than he fell dead on the spot.

THE JOINER WANTED.

An officer had a wooden leg so well made that it could scarcely be distinguished from a real one. During an action, it was carried off by a cannon-ball. A soldier, who saw him fall, called out: 'Quick! run for the surgeon.' 'No,' replied the officer coolly; 'it is the joiner that I want.'

A CUNNING CAT.

A cat that lived in an outhouse was seen one day to take a portion of her dinner and place it deliberately in front of a mouse-hole in a corner. She then retired to a distance and set herself to watch. Not many minutes after, a fine plump mouse came out, gave one look around, and, seeing nothing suspicious, commenced to eat the food. While the mouse was thus pleasantly engaged, pussy made the fatal spring, and devoured her incautious prey.

A FILIAL RAT.

A gentleman walking out in the fields one evening observed a large number of rats moving together in the same direction. He stood still, and the whole procession passed close to him. Among the crowd he was astonished to see an old blind rat holding one end of a piece of stick in its mouth, while another rat held the other end of it. In this way the younger rat was leading its blind companion along to the place whither the others were going.



AN EAGLE ENTRAPPED.

An eagle was caught in a vermin-trap. By his struggles, however, he managed to draw out the peg by which the trap was fastened to the ground, and flew away with it. Nothing was seen for some weeks of eagle or trap, till one day a gentleman, seeing some strange object hanging from the branch of a tree, went to examine what it was, and found the poor bird hanging by its leg, which was firmly held by the trap. The chain and peg had got fixed amongst the branches, and the poor eagle had died miserably from starvation in this position, suspended by the foot.

.THE AMBITIOUS MOUSE.

A mouse that dwelt near the abode of a great magician was kept in such constant distress by its fear of a cat, that the magician, taking pity on it, turned it into a cat itself. Immediately it began to suffer from fear of a dog, so that the magician turned it into a dog. Then it began to suffer from fear of a tiger, and the magician, in disgust, said: 'Be a mouse again. As you have only the heart of a mouse, it is impossible to help you by giving you the body of a noble animal.' And the poor creature again became a mouse. This fable shews the hopelessness of accomplishing anything without 'pluck.'

HEADS AND TAILS.

The Icelanders have a curious but most effectual plan for preventing horses from straying away from any particular spot. If two gentlemen happen to be riding together without attendants, and wish to alight for the purpose of visiting some object at a distance from the road, they tie the head of one horse to the tail of another, and the head of this to the tail of the former. In this state it is utterly impossible that the horses can move on, either backwards or forwards. If disposed to move at all, it will be only in a circle, and even then, there must be an agreement to turn their heads the same way.

A LUCKY HIT.

Protogenes was a famous painter in early times, and lived at Rhodes. One of his masterpieces represented a hound engaged in the chase, and foaming at the mouth from extreme exertion. For a long time, the artist was unable to satisfy himself in properly painting the froth. At last, in a fit of anger, seizing the sponge which he used for wiping off the colours, he threw it violently against the picture. Strange to say, he thus produced by accident a most correct representation of the froth round the animal's mouth. The picture was afterwards preserved in Rhodes.

TIT FOR TAT.

A Cambridge professor once asked one of his friends for the loan of a book which he wished to consult. The messenger returned with the following answer: 'I never allow my books to be taken out of my study; but if you like to come there, you are welcome to read as long as you please.' Some days after this, the friend applied to the professor for the loan of his bellows. Remembering the refusal he had lately met with, he replied: 'I never allow my bellows to be taken out of my room; but if you choose to come there, you are welcome to blow with them as long as you like.'

AN INTELLIGENT HORSE.

A horse that was employed at a silver mine in America was taught to do his work without the assistance of a driver. As soon as his cart was filled with ore, one of the miners gave the signal, and the animal went off to the spot where his load was to be smelted, waited until the cart was emptied, and then returned for another load. The strangest point in his conduct was that he had to take a certain number of loads daily, and knew when his task was finished as well as any of the men did. When he had deposited his last load for the day, he would trot off quickly in the direction of the stable, where he knew he would meet with a kind reception from his mistress.

AN ELEPHANT'S REVENGE.

As a thoughtless elephant-driver in India was passing through a bazaar, a friend handed him a cocoa-nut. Not finding anything at hand against which he might break it, the cruel driver struck it twice against the elephant's forehead. In this way the nut was broken, and the man ate the contents. The sagacious animal did not like his skull to be used for this purpose, and did not forget his driver's cruelty. Next day, as they were both passing along the street, the elephant saw some cocoa-nuts exposed for sale. Quietly turning his trunk to the one side, he seized one of the nuts, threw it with tremendous force at the driver's head, and felled him on the spot.

THE GREENLANDER AND THE BEAR.

A Greenlander went out one dark winter night to see if any seals had been caught in his nets. Finding a seal entangled in one of them, he knelt down on the ice to ret it clear. While thus employed, he received a slap on

the back—from his companion, as he supposed. A second and heavier blow made him turn round quickly, to see whence it came. He was horrified to see a grim old bear at his back instead of his comrade. Bruin tore the seal out of the net and began his supper. The man did not interrupt him, nor wait to see the meal finished. He at once took to his heels, fearing lest his uninvited and unceremonious guest might keep a corner for him.

A TIGER-TRAP.

Tigers are often caught in pits. The track of a tiger is easily found, as they go every evening by the same path to water. A deep hole is dug, covered with light boughs, and a living goat tethered in it. The hunter stands at a distance holding a string, which is fastened to one of the legs of the goat. The string is repeatedly jerked very hard, to make the goat bleat, and the sound can be heard for a long way in the jungle. The tiger has sharp ears and a keen scent. He is there in an instant, gives a spring, falls through, and is impaled upon a sharp arrow made of teak-wood four feet long. The hunter then approaches, and despatches him with his gun.

THE FORCE OF HABIT.

When Sir Walter Scott was at school, there was a boy in the same class who always stood at the top, in spite of all efforts to supplant him. At length Walter observed that when his rival was asked a question, he always fumbled with his fingers at a particular button on the lower part of his waistcoat. The removal of this button, therefore, was resolved upon; and, unluckily for the hitherto invincible dux, it was cut off. Great was Walter'



anxiety to discover the effect of the expedient. It succeeded only too well. When the boy was next questioned, his fingers searched for the friendly button, but it was gone. In his distress he looked down for it, became confused, and was 'taken down' by his knowing rival.

A BRAVE CAT.

While a number of kittens were playing about in the straw near a barn door, a large hawk swooped down upon them, and seized one of them in its claws. Being encumbered by the weight, the bird could not rise very quickly. This gave the mother time to spring to the rescue of her offspring. She immediately flew at the hawk, which, in self-defence, was forced to drop the kitten. A regular battle then took place, the bird having the advantage at first, because he could fly out of the cat's reach. After losing an eye, and having her ears torn to pieces, the cat managed to break the wing of her enemy. Encouraged by this success, she sprang on the maimed hawk with renewed fury, and after a long struggle, laid him dead at her feet.

COOL REVENGE.

One hot summer day, an elephant in a menagerie was enjoying a shower-bath. A large washing-tub had been filled with water for him, and he was squirting it up through his trunk. He shook his big ears with pleasure as the cooling streams trickled down his gray hide. One of the attendants, to save himself the trouble of going to the water-pipe, filled his bucket out of the elephant's tub. The animal allowed two bucketfuls to be taken away without offering any resistance; but when the man had filled his pail the third time, the elephant quietly took it out of his hand, emptied the contents over the man's

head, and then clapped the vessel down upon his shoulders so as to cover his head like an extinguisher.

A REASONING WASP.

A gentleman once noticed on the gravel-walk of his garden a large fly in the clutches of a wasp, which, after cutting off the head and lower part of the body, flew away with the remaining portion, to which the wings were still attached. There being a light breeze at the time, however, the wings of the fly were so caught by it as to render its captor's progress anything but plain sailing. Finding out what the impediment was, the wasp alighted on the ground and nipped off the fly's wings. Having now got quit of the hindrance to its speedy flight, it flew away, and was soon lost to view. This wasp shewed as much power of reason as a sailor who lowers his sails in a gale of wind.

TRIFLES MAKE PERFECTION.

When Michael Angelo, the great sculptor, was employed on one of his noblest works of art, a friend called to see him, and during his visit expressed great surprise at finding his statue apparently no further advanced than when he had seen it a few weeks before. 'Stay, my friend,' said the artist; 'I can assure you that I have been hard at work on it since I saw you last. I have deepened the furrow on the brow, and slightly depressed the eyelid, while I have added another line to the mouth.' 'Yes,' said his friend; 'I see all that; but these things are only trifles.' 'That is true,' replied the sculptor; 'still, it is these trifles which make perfection; and do you call perfection a trifle?'

A CURIOUS REVENGE.

A woman residing in Switzerland recently resorted to a curious mode of revenge. Her cat, of which she was exceedingly fond, had been killed for some reason by one of her neighbours. She at once procured several mouse-traps, so constructed as to catch the animals alive. Having caught some fifty mice, she inclosed them in a box, which she despatched to the offending person. He, suspecting nothing, opened the box, and was horrified to see a swarm of mice spring out, and disperse themselves all over his house. At the bottom of the box he found a note containing these words: 'You killed my cat; I have therefore the honour to send you a few of my mice.'

BECOMING BLIND.

A lady, the mother of two children, found her sight suddenly impaired by some affection of the optic nerve. She consulted an eminent physician who told her that, from the nature of the disease, she could not retain her sight more than a few days at the most, and that she might even become totally blind at any moment. In view of this sad calamity, she returned home, and made such arrangements as would occur to one likely at any moment to be deprived of sight. She then dressed her two children in their neatest costumes, and seated herself before them. With their little faces lifted to hers, and their eyes filled with tears for the great misfortune about to overtake them, she sat till the light at last faded from her eyes. She wished to feast her eyes with the sight which she most delighted to gaze upon, and in her blindness to be able to recall to her mind how her children looked when she saw them for the last time on earth.

QUICK WIT.

The jester attached to the court of Peter the Great of Russia was remarkable for his ingenuity in extricating himself and others from trouble. A cousin of his, on one occasion, had fallen under the czar's displeasure, and was about to be executed. The jester presented himself at court to petition for a reprieve. On seeing him enter the chamber of state, and divining his errand, the monarch shouted to him: 'It's of no use coming here; I swear that I will not grant what you are going to ask.' Quick as thought the fool dropped on his knees, and exclaimed: 'I beseech your Imperial Highness to put that scamp of a cousin of mine to death.' Peter, thus caught in his own trap, had no choice but to laugh, and send a pardon to the offender.

A GRATEFUL LIONESS.

A favourite lioness, named 'Old Girl,' died of bronchitis in the Dublin Zoological Gardens. During her last illness she was much worried by rats, which often swarm in the cages of the carnivora, and, while the beasts are in health, are rather an amusement than an annoyance. The rats, however, began to nibble the toes of the lioness when she could no longer defend herself, and accordingly a terrier was placed in the cage to protect the sufferer. 'Old Girl' at first received the dog with a surly growl; but when she saw him kill the first rat, she began to appreciate her visitor. The lioness coaxed the terrier to her, and folded her paws round him. The dog slept each night on the breast of the lioness, infolded with her paws, and protected her rest from being disturbed by the audacious vermin.

A SENSIBLE SHEEP.

A lamb got entangled in a brier-hedge. Its own struggles and the efforts of the mother, persevered in for a long time, were unavailing in setting it at liberty. Finding at length that additional help must be obtained, the sheep set off at a rapid pace across three fields and through as many hedges, bleating in the most doleful fashion. In the last field was a flock of sheep, to which she seemed in some way to tell her story, for she soon returned, accompanied by a powerful ram, that used his immense horns to good purpose in dragging away the entangling briers and freeing the captive. For this kindly service the lamb and its mother looked grateful, and in their own way continued for some time to bleat their thanks.

A SLY CAT.

Daily, and for a considerable period, the cream-jug in a lady's house was found emptied of more than half its contents, and no one could understand how the cream disappeared. The jug, full to the neck, would be placed on the table by the servant; and during her mistress's removal from one apartment to another, or perhaps to the garden, it would be half-empty on her return. The cat would in the meanwhile be left in the room, with the most perfect faith, not in her honesty, but in the narrowness of the neck of the cream-jug. One evening, however, through the glass door between the parlour and the garden, pussy was observed complacently seated on the table, quietly helping herself to the cream-by inserting her paw in the jug, withdrawing her cream-covered foot, and licking the coating with her tongue.

A WISE GOOSE.

A dairy-maid thought it a great pity that such a large bird as a goose should sit on so few eggs. She therefore put some ducks' eggs into the nest of the goose, that they might be hatched with the others. When the goose came back and noticed the strange eggs, she carefully picked them all out, threw them over the side of the nest, and sat down on her own. Next day the girl put in some more, mixing them up in such a way that she thought no goose could detect them. She was mistaken. Finding the trick repeated, the goose quietly however. waddled round and round her nest, discarding every strange egg, and not till then resumed her maternal The goose won the day; and the baffled dairymaid tried no more tricks upon her, but was obliged toadmit that she had found her match in a goose.

A CAT'S GRATITUDE.

A cat had some kittens, one of which was taken ill, and was apparently in a dying state. She did all she could for it, but finding all her efforts useless, she brought the sick kitten to her mistress, laid it in her lap, and left it in her care. The lady accepted the charge, nursed the kitten through its illness, and at last was able to give it back to its mother quite restored to health. Some time afterwards the lady herself was seized with illness, and was unable to leave her bed. By some mysterious means, the cat became aware of her mistress's condition. Finding herself unable to enter the room by the door, she contrived to climb up the wall of the house, scrambled in at the window, jumped on the bed, and laid a mouse on the pillow, as an offering of affection and gratitude.

CRUELTY PUNISHED.

The members of the Greek Senate were assembled in the open air on Mars Hill, in Athens. During their deliberations they observed a hawk pursuing a sparrow. To escape from the bird of prey, the sparrow took refuge in the bosom of one of the senators. Being naturally of a harsh disposition, he threw the bird from him so roughly that he killed it on the spot. At this his fellow-councillors were grievously offended, and issued a decree expelling him from the senate. Their object in doing this was to shew that clemency and kindness are necessary in conducting the affairs of the state. A man of a heartless and cruel disposition was deemed unfit to hold any place in the government of a country, he having, as it were, renounced his humanity.

A DISPUTE WISELY SETTLED.

A large piece of rock fell from a neighbouring cliff upon a level part of the hill below, which was occupied by the gardens and vineyards of two peasants. As it covered part of the property of each, it could not be easily determined to which of the proprietors the huge block should belong. Instead of going to law to have the question settled, the honest rustics wisely resolved to end the dispute by each party excavating the half of the rock which lay upon his own ground. They did so, and converted the whole mass of rock into two comfortable dwelling-places, with snug rooms, and cellars for their little stock of wine. There the two contented peasants with their families now reside, fully convinced that to fight over a misfortune is only waste of time, but that to turn it to good account is true wisdom.

THE UTILISATION OF MONKEYS.

In the Eastern Straits Settlements, large apes of naturally intelligent breeds are employed much in the same way as human slaves are made use of in some parts of Africa. The cocoa-nut palm is valuable for its fruit, but is very difficult to reach. The owner of a plantation of palms in the Malayan Peninsula trains his apes to climb the trees and judiciously pick the ripest nuts for him, just as the Mozambique Arab trains his negroes to perform the same arduous task. But there appears to be a slight difference between the two cases—the apes seem to delight in the work. The apes thus, employed go up the trees with a line attached, and obey the command of their masters, choosing the proper fruit. They twist the nut round and round till it falls down from its stock. The feat is then hailed on the part of the apes by jumping and chuckling, in token of their satisfaction.

FRIENDLY BIRDS.

In the crowded gardens of the Tuileries, one year, there was witnessed an unusual instance of familiarity between man and the feathered tribes. An old man in very shabby dress might be seen any day summoning birds from the trees and houses round. At his call, pigeons, sparrows, thrushes, and other birds would come flying down, flutter over his head, alight on his hat, his shoulders, and arms, and sit there caressing him. He did not feed them, at least ostensibly, and when, after a time, he had apparently enough of their company, with a wave of his hand he dismissed his court, which all flew quietly away at the signal. They wanted apparently nothing but friendliness from him; and on his part it was not done

for money, but simply for his own pastime, and when the reception was over he walked away among the crowd, which seemed too well used to the sight to heed it much.

CUNNING RATS.

A family in a country house had a fancy for rearing ducks, but could not well do so on account of rats, which systematically got hold of and carried away the young ducklings, even when close to their mother. With a view to circumvent the rats, the maternal duck and her young were housed for the night under a coop, which admitted of no opening for the furtive intruders. rats were not to be so easily cheated of their prey. discovering that the mother-duck and her family were closely shrouded from intrusion, they devised a pretty plan of engineering, which was eminently successful. In the course of a single night they excavated a tunnel, going below the outer edge of the coop up into its interior, and thus very neatly, without producing any alarm, stole every duckling from under the guardianship of its mother.

A FAR-SEEING CAT.

A shopkeeper had a Tom-cat, which he kept night and day in his shop, to keep off mice and rats. On Saturdays, Tom was allowed to accompany his master home, a distance of nearly a mile, and to remain there until the following Monday. Pussy got used to this; and as the shop was always kept open until ten o'clock on Saturdays, Tom regularly left the place and went home three hours before his master. On Monday morning, he was always ready to go back with him again. When he grew older, he got tired of night-duty. So, to avoid this, he would leave the shop when his master made signs of putting up

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the shutters. He would wait a convenient distance till his master came; but finding that he was always caught and carried back, he took to leaving the shop an hour before closing-time. His master used to overtake him half-way home, but never could lay hands on him.

TEASING.

One day a visitor to a menagerie persisted in offering a bun to an elephant, and then pulling it away before the animal could reach it with his trunk. The elephant was very good-tempered at first, but got more and more annoyed as the trick was repeated, and at last sulkily refused to take any more notice of his tormentor. About half an hour afterwards, when he was allowed to come out of his cage, he observed the man who had teased him standing near. In a moment the elephant whipped off the man's straw hat. He held it in his trunk for some time and then offered it to the man, but always pulled it back just as he had done with the bun. After teasing him for a good while, the elephant held it out to him once more; but on the man trying to catch it, the animal quietly swallowed it, and left his tormentor standing bareheaded among the crowd, who laughed heartily at the way in which he was punished for his trick.

THE RIVAL NEWFOUNDLANDS.

As an unlucky Frenchman was walking in the country with a friend, who possessed a magnificent Newfoundland dog, he incautiously questioned the truth of the animal's sagacity. The dog's master, annoyed at the slur cast on his favourite, gave his friend a push and knocked him into a shallow river. 'Turk' immediately sprang in, and seizing one of the tails of the immersed man's coat,

commenced to swim for land. Unfortunately, another Newfoundland, trotting along the other side of the river, saw the affair, and also came to the rescue. The second dog seized the other tail of the coat, and wished to swim back to his master. Turk held fast, and struggled for his side, and the owner of the coat cried in vain for help. At last the coat gave way, and each Newfoundland swam proudly home with a coat-tail in his mouth; so that Turk's master was obliged to plunge in himself to save his friend.

HONOURING A KING.

A man once asked Alexander the Great to give him some money as a dowry for his daughter. The king sent him to his treasurer, and told him to demand whatever sum he pleased. Obedient to the monarch's command. he went and asked an enormous sum. The treasurer was startled at the greatness of the sum asked, and said that he could not part with so much without an express order from the king authorising him to pay the amount. Wishing to see the monarch himself about the matter, the treasurer went to him, and said that he thought a small part of the sum might serve for the occasion. 'No,' replied Alexander; 'let him have it all. I like that man, for he does me honour. He treats me like a king, and proves, by the largeness of his demand, that he believes me to be both rich and generous.' This was enough. The treasurer immediately paid over the sum to the man of great desires.

THE CAT AND THE CANARY.

A lady had a pet canary and a favourite cat. She kept the bird in her bedroom, but sometimes took it out of the cage and let it fly about the room. One morning she was surprised to see the canary sitting on the cat's

back, without fear, while pussy seemed highly delighted. After this the two pets became very fond of each other, and were daily companions. One day, however, she heard the cat give a slight growl, and in an instant saw her seize the bird in her mouth. Tabby then leaped on the bed, her tail like a fox's brush, her back erect, and her eyes glaring. The lady, of course, thought that Dicky was going to be devoured. She was mistaken, however, for Tabby had seized the bird to protect it from a strange cat that had just come in and was going to pounce upon it. The lady immediately put out the intruder, and then Tabby set her prisoner free, and seemed quite happy that she had managed to save its life.

THE FOOL'S EXPLOIT.

At the end of one of the czar's campaigns, several of the officers were relating their exploits, when the imperial jester stepped in among them. 'I've got a story to tell too,' cried he boastfully; 'a better one than any of yours!' 'Let us hear it, then,' said the officers. Upon this the fool began: 'I never liked this way of fighting all in a crowd together, which they have nowadays; it seems to me more manly for each to stand by himself; and therefore I always went out to fight alone. Now it chanced that one day, while reconnoiting close to the enemy's outposts, I suddenly espied a Swedish soldier lying on the ground just in front of me. was not a moment to lose; he might start up and give the alarm. I drew my sword, rushed upon him, and at one blow cut off his right foot.' 'You fool!' cried one of the listeners, 'you should rather have cut off his head.' 'So I would,' answered the jester, with a grin, 'b" somebody else had done that already.'

A HIGH-SPIRITED ELEPHANT.

An elephant was ordered by his driver to drag a heavy load up a road which was very rough and steep. The animal tried all his might, but was unable to move the load. He then ceased pulling, as if to indicate that part of the burden should be removed, or another elephant brought to help him. The owner was angry at being delayed so long on the road, and said in a harsh voice: 'Take that lazy beast away, and bring a better one.' The poor beast was grieved to hear such unjust words used regarding him, after he had done his very utmost. He therefore made one last effort, which moved the load, but cost the noble creature his life. He fell dead on the spot; and his master could not help blaming himself for thus overtaxing the strength of such a valuable and high-spirited animal.

THE WREN'S REQUIEM.

One morning early in the spring, a gentleman heard an unusual twittering sound outside the window of his bedroom. On looking up, he saw hanging from the thatch, two curious festoons apparently in motion. On a closer examination, he found that the two halfcircles were composed of twenty or thirty little wrens clinging to each other by foot and wing. The birds clung together thus for about two minutes, twittering mournfully all the while; then suddenly, as if by one consent, they broke loose in a moment, and flew away. On descending shortly afterwards, the gentleman found a dead wren lying just under the window, over which the festoons of wrens had been hanging a few minutes before. The affectionate little creatures had been singing a dirge over their dead friend below. From that time the wrens deserted the locality for more than two years.

THE WAY TO CONQUER.

'I'll master it,' said the axe, and his blows fell heavily on the iron; but every blow made his edge more blunt, till he ceased to strike. 'Leave it to me,' said the saw: and with his relentless teeth he worked backwards and forwards on its surface till they were all worn down or broken; then he fell aside. 'Ha, ha!' said the hammer, 'I knew you wouldn't succeed. I'll shew you the way;' but at his first fierce stroke off flew his head, and the iron remained as before. try?' asked the fire. But they all despised the fire, which curved gently round the iron, and embraced it. and never left it until it melted under his irresistible influence. There are hearts hard enough to resist the force of wrath, the malice of persecution, and the fury of pride, so as to make their acts recoil on their adversaries; but there is a power stronger than any of these, and hard indeed is the heart that can resist the power of love

STORIES OF SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

HIS GALLANTRY REWARDED.

Sir Walter Raleigh, the famous courtier, soldier, and author, who flourished in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, is said to have been introduced to his sovereign in the following way. The queen, when out taking a walk, came to a muddy part of the road, and hesitated to proceed. Raleigh, who happened to have on a new and very rich plush cloak, observing her annoyance, immediately doffed his cloak, and spread it over the mud, as a footcloth for the royal pedestrian. It is said that Her Majesty trod on it as gently as possible, and soon rewarded her courtier's gallantry by the present of a rich suit. She was highly

pleased with his good address and handsome figure, and afterwards he became one of her greatest favourites.

HIS SERVANT'S MISTAKE.

Raleigh was among the first to introduce the practice of smoking tobacco among our countrymen. One day, as he was enjoying the fragrant weed, his servant had occasion to go to him with a message. On entering his room, however, he was shocked at seeing his master enveloped in smoke, through which he also perceived the red glow of something burning. Thinking that his master's clothes had accidentally caught fire, he ran for a bucket of water, and discharged its contents over him. Sir Walter did not go into a rage with the servant for putting his pipe out in this effectual but unceremonious way. He only took a hearty laugh at the man's mistake, and explained to him that he knew of an easier and equally effective method.

THE WEIGHT OF SMOKE.

Another story is told of this famous statesman. He was one day telling the queen all he had heard of the properties and virtues of tobacco. To awaken her interest, he told her that he could ascertain the exact weight of the smoke which issued from his pipe. The idea of weighing smoke appeared to the queen so absurd, that she laid a wager that he could not prove the truth of his assertion. He accepted the wager, weighed some tobacco, put it into his pipe, and puffed away till the whole was consumed. He then ascertained the weight of the ashes left in the pipe. Of course, the queen was obliged to admit that the difference between the weight of the ashes and that of the tobacco had gone 'off in smoke.' She paid her bet, and remarked: 'Many labourers in the fire turn gold into smoke, but you have

turned smoke into gold.' This referred to the alchemists who, in those days, threw away money in making fruit-less attempts to change the baser metals into gold.

CONTENTMENT.

An Austrian nobleman built a magnificent house in Vienna, and caused to be inscribed on the front of it these words: 'This house was erected by Count Dorn, to be given to the first man who can prove that he is contented.' One day a stranger knocked at the gate, and desired to speak with the master. 'I am come,' said he, to take possession of this house, as I find that you have built it in order to bestow it on the man who is really contented. I am willing to take an oath that I am in that state; you will, therefore, please to give me immediate possession.' When he had said this, the count replied: You are quite right, sir, with respect to my intentions; but I cannot discover the least trace of contentment in your character. If you were quite contented you would not wish to get possession of my house. I beg you, therefore, to retire from the premises.' As any man's asking for the house was a substantial proof of his discontentment, the count got keeping it to himself.

CHEATING A FISH.

A little stream that flowed past a gentleman's house was crossed by a wooden bridge. A trout took up its abode under a stone in a pool immediately below the bridge. When passing to and from the house, the boys amused themselves by feeding the trout with worms, and the fish soon learned to come out from its hole and seize the worm thrown into the pool, no matter how many spectators might be on the bridge or what noise they made.

A trick was once played on the poor fish by a person throwing in a long thin radish, which much resembled a worm in shape and colour. Out came the trout at once, and caught it before it reached the bottom. Finding, however, that it had been deceived, the fish let go the radish, and withdrew to its usual lurking-place. Once or twice afterwards the trick was successfully repeated; but the trout soon learned to distinguish a radish from a worm, and although prompt enough in coming for the one, refused to come out for the other.

A FEARLESS LADY.

A Scottish lady, Mrs Margaret Lambrun, who had been many years in the service of Mary, queen of Scots, once told the truth to Queen Elizabeth in a very fearless way. Misery, brought into the lady's family by the execution of her royal mistress, impelled her to threaten vengeance on Queen Elizabeth. She came to London, put on male costume, concealed two pistols about her, and got near the queen. The accidental dropping of one of the pistols led to her detection. When brought before the queen. she boldly confessed her scheme, and said, when asked for her motives: 'I will tell you plainly, provided you will please to let me know whether you put this question in the quality of a queen or in that of a judge?' 'In that of a queen.' 'Then your Majesty ought to grant me a pardon.' 'But what security can you give me that you will not make another attempt upon my life?' 'Madam, a favour conferred under such restrictions is no more a favour; and in so doing, your Majesty would act against me as a judge.' The queen immediately pardoned her would-be assassin, and, turning to her attendants, said: 'I have been thirty years a queen, but do not remember ever to have had such a lecture read to me before.'

A NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS.

Scoggan the court-fool once borrowed five hundred pounds from Queen Elizabeth. The time for repayment had long passed, and the Queen insisted upon having her money, notwithstanding his prayers to be released from the debt. One day he heard that she was to pass his house, and upon this he bethought himself of a means to get rid of his liability. Accordingly, he had a coffin made; and when the hour approached at which the Queen was expected, he put himself into the box, had it shouldered by his friends and carried outside. On Elizabeth inquiring whom they were going to bury, they told her it was her humble servant Scoggan the jester. 'Indeed!' said she. 'I never heard that he was ill. Is the fool really dead? He owed me five hundred pounds, but I heartily forgive him.' At these words, Scoggan rose in his coffin and said: 'I thank your Majesty cordially. The favour you have shewn me is so great that it hath raised me from the dead!' This was certainly a new way to pay old debts.

A SENSIBLE CAT.

As the mistress of a house was sitting by the fire one day, the cat came up, and looking in her face, mewed most piteously. Being engaged, she paid no attention to it at first. The cat, however, was not to be discouraged by this neglect, but continued her cries, going backwards and forwards between the fireplace and the door in a state of great agitation. The lady wished to find out the cause of the poor animal's uneasiness, but was reluctant to leave her seat at the time. At last the cat extended her paws, and pulled her by the apron. She then rose and followed her conductor into the washhouse, where some tubs, partly filled with water, were

standing. To her great consternation, she beheld her little girl lying head downmost in one of the tubs, and in danger of drowning. But for the accident being noticed by this intelligent cat, and the effort made by puss to draw her mistress's attention to the child's danger, the little girl would in all likelihood have perished.

AN ARTISTIC THEFT.

A French marquis, one of the handsomest men of his age, was one day in a crowded church in Paris during the performance of mass. A man in the crowd pushed against him several times, and then civilly asked him to turn to one side. The nobleman naturally asked the reason of the request, when the man declared that a lady had commissioned an artist to take the marquis's portrait, that he was then engaged in doing so, and wished to see his face in a particular attitude. The highly flattered gentleman looked up in the direction indicated, and seeing a man staring at him and holding something like a pencil in his hand, obligingly turned as he was desired, and took all possible pains to remain quite still in the position the artist required. After a time, the man beside him thanked him very warmly for his compliance, and told him that the task was completed. So it was, for the marquis had been stripped of his watch, purse, and handkerchief. while posed, as he thought, for the artist.

THE QUEEN AND THE HERD-BOY.

One day some years ago, when Queen Victoria was standing on the public road at Balmoral, sketching the castle from a particular point, a flock of sheep approached. Her Majesty being intent on her work, took little notice

of the flock, and merely moved a little nearer the side of the road. The boy in charge of the sheep shouted at the pitch of his voice: 'Stand oot o' the road, woman, and let the sheep go by.' The Queen not moving out of the way quite so fast as the shepherd wished. he again shouted: 'What are ve stan'in' there for? Gang oot o'that, and let the sheep pass.' One of Her Majesty's attendants, who had been at a distance, on hearing his royal mistress thus rudely assailed, went up to the shepherd and demanded of him: 'Do you know whom you thus rudely address, boy?' 'No. I neither ken nor care, but whoever she be, she sudna be in the sheep's road.' 'That's the Queen,' said the official. The boy looked astonished; and, after recovering his senses, said, with great simplicity: 'The Queen! Why, then, disna she pit on clothes that folk can ken her by?'

BY THE HELP OF AN ASS.

A team of horses that had been ploughing all day were turned loose in the evening at the top of a long winding lane leading to the farm-house. They were daily in the habit of pushing open the gate that led into the farm-vard and walking into the stable for their supper. On this occasion, however, the gate was fastened by a piece of wood thrust into a staple driven into the side-post. Sitting at the parlour window, the farmer watched them pushing against the gate, but did not trouble himself to come down and let them in, as he knew that the ploughmen would soon be there to look after them. In the meantime, however, an ass that had been browsing on thistles in the lane walked up to the gate, whipped his head over the top bar, and drew out the pin with his teeth. He then gave a terrific bray, as much as to say, 'That's the way to do it!' and threw

open the entrance to his burly brethren. To say nothing of the politeness of the act, by which perhaps he profited as much as they, it must be admitted that in this case the 'stupid ass' shewed more sense than the proverbially sagacious horse.

A LOVE-STORY.

Eginhard, the secretary of the Emperor Charlemagne, fell desperately in love with his daughter, the princess, who at length allowed his advances. One winter's night his visit was prolonged to a late hour, and in the meantime there had been a deep fall of snow. If he left, his footmarks would betray him, and yet to remain longer would expose him no less to danger. At length the princess resolved to carry him on her back to a neighbouring house, which she did. It happened, however, that from the window of his chamber the emperor witnessed this novel proceeding; and in the assembly of the lords on the following day, when Eginhard and his daughter were present, he asked what ought to be done to a man who should compel a king's daughter to carry him on her shoulders through frost and snow on a winter's night. They answered that he was worthy of death. The lovers became alarmed, but the emperor, addressing Eginhard, said: 'As thou didst love my daughter, thou shouldst have come to me and craved me to favour thy suit. Thou art worthy of death-but I give thee two lives: take thy fair porter in marriage; fear God; and love one another.'

A WISE OLD HORSE.

An old horse, disabled for further work through increasing age and infirmities, was allowed to remain liberty in the fields all summer. When the cold eather set in, he invariably opened the gates and

made his way to the stables, where he took up his quarters for the winter. In the stable-yard there was a pump with a trough underneath, which only held a small quantity of water, so that the animals had to be watered by means of a bucket. Sometimes the old horse was not watered so regularly as he would have liked. He had, however, observed the process of pumping, and thought he could manage for himself. When thirsty. he would take the pump handle in his mouth, and raising it up and down till the water flowed, would then suck it from the bottom of the trough, repeating the process until he was satisfied. A stupid hostler put a padlock on the pump, to prevent the poor animal helping himself. The owner of the horse, however, ordered it to be removed; and many people were amused at seeing the method adopted by the wise old animal. He never forgot the habit, but renewed the trick each winter.

OILING A VENTRILOQUIST.

A gentleman on board a steamer was whiling away the time by watching the movements of the engine. Near him stood another passenger apparently bent on the same object. In a few moments a squeaking noise was heard on the opposite side of the engine, as if some part of the machinery required oiling. Seizing the oil-can, the engineer sought out the spot whence the creaking seemed to proceed, and liberally applied the contents to every joint. All went on well for a time, till the same noise was heard in another direction. The oiling process was repeated and quietness restored; but as the engineer was coming quietly towards the spot occupied by the gentleman and the stranger, he heard another squeak. This time he detected the true source of the noise. The stranger was a ventriloquist, and had been practising

his art by imitating the creaking of machinery needing oil. Walking straight up behind the joker, the engineer seized him by the nape of the neck, and emptied the contents of the oil-can down his back. 'There!' said he. 'I don't believe your squeaking machinery will need oiling again in a hurry.'

AN OBLIGING GOOSE.

A goose belonging to a miller, by some accident was left solitary, without mate or offspring, gander or goslings. It so happened that the miller's wife set a number of ducks' eggs under a hen, which in due time were hatched. Of course the ducklings, as soon as they left the nest, ran by a natural instinct to the water. The hen was in a sad plight—her feelings as a mother urging her to follow the brood, and her instinct as a hen disposing her to keep on dry land. Meanwhile, up sailed the goose, and with a noisy gabble, which (being interpreted) meant, 'Leave them to my care,' she swam up and down with the ducklings, and, when they were tired with their aquatic excursion, she consigned them to the care of the hen. Next morning, down came the ducklings to the pond again, and there was the goose waiting for them, and there stood the hen in a great flurry. Observing her maternal anxiety, the goose came near the shore, whereupon the hen jumped on her back, and sat there. The ducklings then swam up and down the pond, followed by the hen on goose-back. This arrangement seemed to please both birds, for day after day the hen might be seen upon the goose, attending the ducklings in perfect content and good-humour. Numbers of people came to witness the curious sight, until at length the ducklings, able to take care of themselves, required no longer the joint guardianship of the goose and the hen.

SELF-SACRIFICE

The battle of Sempach was fought between the Austrians and the Swiss in the year 1396. The mountaineers occupied the wooded heights round the lake; and the ground being unsuited for cavalry movements, the Austrian knights dismounted, and formed a solid mass of steel glittering in the blaze of the autumn sun. The Austrian front presented such an unbroken ridge of spears, that the hardy mountain-men could not vierce it. Many of their little band fell dead or wounded, and the wings of the Austrian line were curving round to hem them in. Just then, Arnold Winkelried, a knight of Unterwalden, told his comrades to follow him and hewould open for them a way to victory. With outstretched arms he dashed upon the Austrian lances, grasping together as many as he could reach, and as they pierced his brave breast, bore their points with him to the ground. Like an impetuous torrent, his countrymen rushed through the gap; the ranks of the enemy were broken, and soon all was confusion and dismay. Seizing the critical moment, the dauntless mountaineers fell upon their foes; two thousand knights were slain, and victory declared itself in favour of the Swiss-thanks to the self-sacrifice of the noble Winkelried.

THE COAST-GUARD OUTWITTED.

On the coast of Dorsetshire, smuggling used to be carried on to a great extent. A chief officer of the coast-guard was riding out one day on the look-out for contraband goods. On turning a sharp corner in the sunny lane along which he was going, he met a man carrying on his shoulder a good-sized keg of spirits. 'Hollo, my man, what's this?' cried the officer. The man at first

looked doubtful for a moment, but recovering his presence of mind, he said: 'You are the chief officer, I suppose?' Being answered in the affirmative, he continued: 'The lieutenant gave me this keg, which he found this morning, and told me to take it to you directly. I am glad I have met you, as the day is hot, and the kee heavy to carry.' He then made as if he were going to relinquish the burden. The officer, looking quite indignant, exclaimed: 'You know quite well I can't take it.' 'But you are on horseback, and you can carry it better than I can: I am so tired, retorted the smuggler. On this, the officer handed the man a shilling, and told him to carry the keg to the coast-guard station. They parted; but during the day the officer was chagrined to discover that he had given a smuggler a shilling to carry off to its hiding-place the keg of contraband spirits.

THE ELEPHANT AND THE COCOA.

Tom, the fine elephant brought home from India by His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, was a present from Sir Jung Bahadoor. Being very tame, a house was built for the animal on the upper deck, and his tricks gave great amusement to the crew on the voyage home. One cold wet night, on the passage between the Cape of Good Hope and New Zealand, a midshipman boiled a large saucepanful of cocoa, and placing it just outside Tom's house, went to call his shivering watch-mates to come and partake of the savoury beverage. Quickly they obeyed the summons. As they neared the pot, however, the smell from which already filled their nostrils, an ominous suction-sound reached their ears. 'I know I put the pan here,' exclaimed the middy, as he gazed on the vacant deck. 'The elephant!' shouted one of his mates, who pushed aside the screen

in front of Tom's house. Sure enough there was the elephant, the picture of innocence, also the pot, minus the lid and the cocoa. Seizing the vessel, the angry middy belaboured the thief; but having unwisely left the instrument of castigation within easy reach, the elephant seized it with his trunk, put it under his ponderous feet, and broke it to pieces.

AN ATTENTIVE CAT.

A certain lady's little son was ill of scarlet fever. The period of inflammation and danger was just over, but the poor child was unable to sit or stand. Through all his illness he had been carefully watched by a faithful Tomeat, who seldom left his bedside by night or by day; for Tom dearly loved the little fellow, who, though now so still and quiet, used to play with him on the parlour But since his little master's illness. Tom had never been known to make the slightest attempt at fun. One day, the child was taken by its mother from bed, and laid on the cool sofa by way of change. When he had fallen asleep she gently left the room, Tom being on guard as usual. She was engaged in some household duties, and had not been gone many minutes, when Tom entered with tail erect, and mewing most piteously. looked up into her face, and then ran to the door, plainly entreating his mistress to hurry along with him. It was well she did so. Poor Tom ran before her to the room in which she had left her boy, when she found that, in attempting to get up, the child had fallen on the floor along with the rugs in which he was wrapped. He lay in such a position, that death from suffocation would have inevitably followed, but for the timely aid summoned by his old playmate.

FIVE HUNDRED WITNESSES.

A poor man claimed a house which a rich man had unlawfully seized. The former produced his title-deeds, to prove his right to the property; but the latter had provided a number of witnesses to appear in the court on his behalf. To bias the judge in his favour, he presented him with a bag containing five hundred ducats. the case came on for trial, the poor man told his story, produced his writings, but had no witnesses to corroborate his statements. The rich man, on the other hand, had all his declarations backed out by witnesses, and urged the judge to decide in his favour. The judge, in reply. drew from beneath his chair the bag with the five hundred ducats which the rich man had sent him as a bribe. Holding up the money in his hand, he said: 'You have been much mistaken as to my character, for I take no bribes. If the poor man could bring forward no witnesses in confirmation of his right, I myself can furnish him with five hundred. If you had a good case, you would not have cared to try to corrupt me. Your attempted bribery is an evidence of the wrong which you have done to this poor man.' He then threw the bag to the rich man with a look of reproach and indignation. and decreed the house to the poor but honest plaintiff.

A BRAVE DOG.

A little boy was out one morning amusing himself with his elder brother near a stream which happened at the time to be in flood. They leaned over a wire-fence on the edge of the water, to catch the pieces of wood and other waifs borne down by the current. Suddenly, the wire against which the little boy was leaning gave way, when he fell into the water, and was carried along by the

current towards the sea. His brother, unable to help him, ran home and raised the alarm. His father and some of the neighbours immediately rushed away along the banks of the stream, followed by a faithful collie dog. For a time, no trace of the boy could be seen; but after running about a quarter of a mile along the bank, the dog apparently saw the object of their search coming . to the surface, for he sprang into the water. In a few moments he was seen struggling to regain the bank with what seemed the lifeless body of the child. Seeing that the noble animal had succeeded in securing his son, the agonised father sprang into the torrent and seconded the frantic efforts of the dog to bring the body to land. They succeeded in doing so; and by the use of the proper means, the little fellow gradually recovered consciousness, and was not much the worse of his wetting.

TWO CROWS BETTER THAN ONE.

In places where pheasants are preserved, it is customary to give them their food in such a way that other birds This is done by placing it in a feedingcannot reach it. box, which is closed by a lid, communicating by a lever with a perch. The weight of the lid is so adjusted that when a pheasant stands on the perch the lid is raised, and the bird can get at the food. The pheasants soon learn the object of the perch, for, when these boxes are first introduced, a few beans are laid on the outside of the lid. The bird gets on the perch in order to reach them, and so exposes the store of food in the box. One day a gentleman was watching the pheasants and their boxes on the lawn just before the house, and saw a crow also watching them. Presently the crow flew to one of the boxes, settled upon the perch, and expected the bov to open. The bird, however, being much lighter the

pheasant, was unable to lift the lid in spite of all its efforts. After several ineffectual attempts, it flew off to a tree where there was another crow, and a grand jabbering ensued. The two crows then flew to the feeding-box, both settled on the perch, and their united weight was sufficient to raise the lid.

A CLEVER FOX.

At Dalkeith Palace there was a large court, surrounded by a high wall, in which the young hounds used to be trained to their future employment by having a live fox turned loose, when the huntsman or his whipper-in had been lucky enough to obtain one. There were two gates to the courtyard, but they were much lower than the walls: and, to prevent the unfortunate captives from trying to escape at these points, a servant was stationed at each. On one occasion an experienced old fox, who had often baffled his pursuers, was caught in a trap and brought out, to have some young hounds exercise their skill upon him. Upon being unbagged, Reynard coolly sat down, and gazed around him with great circumspection, as if deliberating what was best to be done in his present desperate circumstances. No sooner was the pack let loose than he shewed that his cogitations had not been in vain. Giving a fierce growl, he ran with open mouth at the guardian of one of the gates. In the greatest terror at the prospect of being throttled, the man wheeled round his back to the infuriated animal, and at the same time ducked down his head, as cowards generally do in such cases. Reynard instantly leaped on the conveniently rounded shoulders of the man whom he had so easily frightened, sprang over the gate, and escaped into the woods.

A SAGACIOUS DONKEY.

A Spanish peasant had for many years carried milk into the city of Madrid, to supply his customers. Every morning he and his donkey, with loaded panniers, trudged their accustomed round. At last the peasant fell sick; and having no one to send to market in his place, his wife proposed to send the faithful old animal by himself. The panniers were accordingly filled with canisters of milk; and an inscription, written out by the priest, and placed on the donkey's forehead, requested the customers to measure their own milk and return the Everything being ready, the donkey set off with his load. In due time he returned with empty canisters, and this he continued to do for several days. The house-bells in Madrid are usually so constructed that you pull downwards to make them ring. The peasant afterwards learned that the sagacious animal stopped before the door of every customer, and after waiting what he thought a sufficient time, pulled the bell with his mouth. If no one answered his ring, he passed on to the next house where he used to stop. He went on in this way till all the customers were served, and the canisters emptied. He then went home to the sick peasant's with the money that had been paid for the milk

THE ABSENT PHILOSOPHER.

The great philosopher, Sir Isaac Newton, was often so deeply absorbed in the difficult questions which engaged his attention, that he became quite absent. One day a gentleman paid him a visit, but was told that Sir Isaac was in his study, and that no one was permitted to disturb him there. As it was near dinner-time, however, the visitor sat down in the dining-room to wait for the

philosopher. In a short time the servant placed on the table a boiled chicken under a cover. A long hour passed, but Sir Isaac did not appear. The gentleman, feeling hungry, ate the fowl, and, covering up the wellpicked skeleton, desired the servant to prepare another for her master. Before the second chicken was ready, however, the great man entered the room, and apologised for his delay, adding: 'As I feel rather fatigued and faint, perhaps you will excuse me a little longer, while I take my dinner, and then I shall be at your service.' Saving this, he lifted the cover, and without emotion, turned round to the gentleman with a smile, and said: 'See what a strange set we studious people are. I quite forgot that I had dined already.' Just then the servant brought in the other chicken. The visitor explained how matters stood; and, after a hearty laugh, the hungry philosopher sat down to dine.

A TRICKY DOG.

An English officer, who was once living in Paris, had often occasion to cross one of the bridges over the river Seine. One day, when passing a particular part of the bridge, he got his boots dirtied by a poodle-dog rubbing against them. He went to a shoeblack stationed on the bridge, and got them cleaned. The same thing having occurred more than once, his curiosity was excited, and he watched the dog. He saw him go and roll himself in the mud of the river, and then watch for a person with well-polished boots, against which he contrived to rub himself. Finding out that the shoeblack was the owner of the dog, the officer charged him with having taught the animal this method of bringing him customers. After some hesitation, the man confessed that he had trained the dog to perform the trick. Being much struck with the dog's sagacity, the officer purchased him at a high price, and brought him with him on his return to England. Having tied up the animal some time in London, he released him; but the dog remained with him only a day or two, and then disappeared. A fortnight afterwards the dog had returned to Paris, and was found at his old quarters, pursuing his questionable trade of dirtying gentlemen's boots on the bridge, in the hope that his master might afterwards be paid for cleaning them.

THE VALUE OF PRECISION.

The mayor of Falaise one night ran against a citizen of that good town in the days when there was neither gas nor oil-lamp to dissipate the gloom. The mayor gave orders next morning that no citizen should go out at night without a lantern. The following night, the mayor, going his rounds, ran against the same citizen. 'You haven't read the ordinance, you stupid fellow!' said the mayor, in a passion. 'Yes, I have,' said the Norman; 'and here's my lantern.' 'But there's nothing in it,' rejoined the mayor. 'The ordinance said nothing about that,' replied the scrupulous citizen. The next day there appeared a new ordinance, enjoining the citizens to put candles in their lanterns. At nightfall, the mayor, anxious to see whether his orders were being obeyed, went his rounds again, and once more ran foul of the luckless citizen. 'I have you this time,' said the mayor, in a fury; 'you have no lantern.' 'Excuse me; here it is.' 'But no candle in it.' 'Oh, but I have, and here it is.' And out of the lantern he pulled a candle—unlighted. 'But it isn't lighted,' resumed the exasperated mayor. 'You said nothing about lighting the candle,' quickly rejoined the lantern-bearer. So another ordinance had to be issued, enjoining the citizens to light the candles in their lanterns.

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A DEAR CAT.

A citizen of Bordeaux made his will, in which he ordered his executors to sell a fine horse that he had, and give the proceeds to one of the religious houses in the city. It so happened, however, that all the rest of his effects were barely sufficient to pay his debts, and his widow and children still remained to be provided for. The monks were not long in putting in their claim for the value of the horse that had been bequeathed to their monastery. The widow sent her servant to sell the horse at the fair, which was being held at the time, as it so happened, and directed him how to act. The animal being an uncommonly fine one, it was not long before his price was asked. 'One pistole,' answered the servant. The intending purchaser was astonished at such a low price being asked, and thought the seller was joking, for a pistole is worth only about half-a-crown. 'Nay,' said the servant; 'I am in earnest. But I have a cat here which you must buy also, or you cannot get the horse at the price I have named. The price of the cat is three hundred pistoles.' The three hundred and one pistoles were counted out at once, and the horse and cat were taken away by their new owner. The widow then sent one pistole to the outwitted priests, as the proceeds of the bequest left them, and kept the three hundred for the support of herself and her family.

FOOLHARDINESS.

A sailor belonging to the crew of a vessel engaged in whale-fishing, once determined to attack a Polar bear which he saw at some distance on the ice. His comrades tried to persuade him to give up his intention, but in vain. Seizing a whale-lance, he approached the bear,

which stood waiting the attack. On seeing his enemy so fierce and powerful, the sailor grew faint-hearted, and, after standing motionless for some time, took to his heels. The bear, however, pursued him with hasty strides, and the foolhardy sailor dropped his whale-lance, his cap, and his gloves, one after the other, to prevent the animal from following him. Bruin sniffed at the lance, tore the cap in pieces, and tossed the gloves about with his huge paws. Not satisfied with this, he continued the chase. and would doubtless have torn the sailor in pieces, had not the rest of the crew, seeing the danger of their companion, sallied forth to the rescue. The terrified sailor ran towards his comrades, who opened up a passage for him, and then prepared to attack his pursuer. Bruin, however, was prudent as well as brave, for, after seeing the force of his opponents, he effected an honourable retreat. The valiant sailor who had fled before the bear. never stopped a moment in his flight till he reached the ship, preferring to be laughed at as a coward, rather than face his fierce-looking foe. Let us remember that foolhardiness is quite a different thing from courage.

THE POWER OF LOVE.

Thomas à Becket was an eminent ecclesiastic, who flourished in the reign of Henry II. of England, and attained to the dignities of archbishop and chancellor. His father, Gilbert Becket, was in his youth a soldier in the Crusades, but being taken prisoner he became the slave of an emir or Saracen prince. By degrees he gained the confidence of his master, and through time the prince's daughter fell in love with him. After some time he effected his escape, and found his way home to his native country. The Turkish maiden followed him with her loving heart, and longed to be near him again.

To accomplish her desire was a difficult task, for she knew but two words of the English language—London and Gilbert. But the strength of her affection overcame the difficulties in her path, for, by repeating the word London, she obtained a passage in a vessel bound for England, and found her way to the metropolis. She then went from street to street crying 'Gilbert! Gilbert!' A crowd collected around her wherever she went, asking her a thousand questions, to all of which she had but one answer: 'Gilbert! Gilbert!' By-and-by she reached the street in which he who had won her heart in slavery was living as a prosperous citizen. He recognised her, and took her to his home. The far-travelled princess became his wife; and in her English home found a reward for the toil and danger through which she had passed to reach the object of her love.

THE EARL AND THE FARMER.

An honest farmer once called on the Earl Fitzwilliam, to represent that his crop of wheat had been much injured in a field adjoining a certain wood in which his lordship's hounds had frequently met to hunt during the winter. He stated that, in some parts, the young wheat had been cut up and destroyed to such an extent that he could scarcely hope for any produce. His lordship, knowing the reasonableness of the farmer's complaint, offered to give him compensation for the damage done, if a reliable estimate of the loss were obtained. The farmer replied, that, in anticipation of his lordship's considerate kindness, he had got a friend to estimate the loss, and that he thought fifty pounds would be sufficient to cover it. The earl at once paid the money. As the harvest, however, approached, it turned out that in those parts of the field which had been most trampled the crop was strongest and most luxuriant. Finding that after all no loss had been sustained, but quite the reverse, the farmer again called on his lordship, told him how the matter stood, and asked him to take back the fifty pounds. 'Ah,' exclaimed the venerable earl, 'this is what I like; this is as it should be between man and man.' He then went into another room, and returning with a cheque for a hundred pounds, presented it to the farmer, saying: 'Take care of this; and when your eldest son is of age, present it to him, and tell him the occasion that produced it.'

THE WORST OF THE LOT.

A German prince who was once travelling through France, visited the arsenal at Toulon, where the galleys were kept. As a compliment to his rank, the commandant told him that he was welcome to set free any galleyslave whom he might select. Wishing to make the best use of his privilege, he went among the convicts and spoke to many of them in succession, always taking care to ask each one why he had been condemned to the galleys. Injustice, oppression, and false accusations were assigned by one after another as the causes of their condemnation. In fact, according to their own account, they were all injured and ill-treated men. At last he came to one who, when asked the same question, answered: 'Indeed, your Highness, I have no reason to complain. I have been a very wicked, desperate wretch. I have deserved to be broken alive on the wheel. I account it a great mercy that my life has been spared, and that I have been sent to work as a galley-slave, instead of being put to death for my crimes.' On hearing this confession, the prince fixed his eyes on him, and said: 'You wicked wretch! It is a shame that you

should be allowed to remain among so many honest men. By your own confession, you are bad enough to corrupt them all; but you shall not remain in their company another day.' So saying, he turned to the officer in command, and said: 'This is the man whom I wish to release.' The criminal who had such a deep sense of his own guilt was accordingly set at liberty.

A CHURCH-GOING DOG.

In some pastoral districts of Scotland, the number of dogs present during divine service never fails to attract the notice of strangers. The shepherd likes to be always accompanied by his dog, and the dog likes to be with his master. He seems to regard going to church as a privilege. When the minister of a pastoral parish in Tweeddale entered on his charge, being a stranger to the district, he was annoyed at the presence of so many dogs in church, and requested their masters to leave them at home. The shepherds, perhaps, wondered a little, but the request was generally complied with for a time. However, there was one splendid collie that soon made his appearance again, and took up his place on the pulpit stairs, which he had long specially appropriated to himself, lying very quietly, unless some other dog ventured to set foot upon the stairs, an intrusion which he would not permit. One day the minister met the owner of the dog, accompanied of course by his faithful attendant. The shepherd immediately referred apologetically to the subject. 'Ye see, sir,' he said, 'after what ye said to us, we tried to keep the dogs at hame; but this ane was owre gleg [too sharp] for us. We steekit [shut] him in for twa Sabbath-days, but ever rince that, we never see him on the Sabbath mornin'; just slips awa some way on the Saturday nicht, and

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the next we see o' him is on the pulpit stairs, when we come to the kirk.'

EMBARRASSMENT RELIEVED.

As some travellers were seated at table in an hotel. one of the company brought out a very rare gold coin. It was passed round the table in a plate, and gave rise to many suppositions as to its age, country, and value. conversation then gradually branched off to other subjects, and the coin was forgotten. By-and-by the owner asked it back again, but, to the surprise of all, it was nowhere to be found. During the search, a gentleman sitting at the foot of the table was observed to be in great agitation. As his embarrassment seemed to increase as the search continued, the company were about to propose that his pockets should be examined, when suddenly a waiter entered the room, saying: 'Here is the coin. The cook has just found it in one of the finger-glasses.' The relief to all was manifest; and now, for the first time, the suspected stranger spoke as follows: 'Gentlemen-None of vou can rejoice more than myself at the discovery of the coin. If you reflect for a moment, you can picture to vourselves my painful situation. By a singular coincidence. I have a duplicate of the very same coin in my purse;' and here he shewed it to the company. 'The idea that on a personal search, which would probably be proposed, I would be taken for a purloiner of the coin. added to the fact that I am a stranger here, with no one to wouch for my integrity, had almost driven me distracted. The honesty of the cook and lucky accident have saved my honour.' The friendly congratulations of the company soon effaced the remembrance of their unjust suspicions, and thereafter the travellers spent a happy evening together.

FROLICSOME DOGS.

An Edinburgh minister was to preach a sermon on a summer evening in an empty wool-barn in one of the most lonely dales of the southern highlands of Scotland. and the inhabitants, mostly shepherds and their families, The wool-barn was in the were assembled to hear him. upper flat of a two-storied building, and the approach to it was by an outside stair without a railing. The congregation consisted of some forty or fifty people, but the barn would have held a much greater number, and there was a wide open space between the table at which the preacher stood and the nearest seat placed for the hearers. The dogs which the shepherds had brought with them at once appropriated this to themselves as a fit place for amusement. They evidently did not suppose themselves at church, and felt under no obligation to maintain quiet and orderly behaviour. They were in a very frolicsome humour: and at first it seemed doubtful if divine service could be proceeded with, as there was from a dozen to a score of dogs playing in the open space, now worrying each other in sport, now chasing each other round and round with wonderful activity. Occasionally they all rushed out by the open door and down-stairs, but soon returned again to resume their frolic on the barn-It happened erelong, however, that one of them, in rushing out, touched and upset an earthenware plate which was set upon the landing-place at the top of the stair for the collection, usually made in Scotland on every occasion of public worship. The plate was broken, and the coppers scattered on the ground; but the service went on without further interruption from the dogs. Immediately on the smash and jingle being heard, every dog disappeared from the barn, and not one of them shewed face again till the congregation was

dismissed. They evidently knew that they had committed a fault. One of them had done the mischief, but they were all art and part; and taking blame to themselves accordingly, they fled in terror of merited castigation.

THE HISTORIAN AND THE BALLADS.

Macaulay the historian was fond of rummaging old book-stalls, and scarcely a dusty old book-shop in any by-court or out-of-the-way corner in London escaped his attention. He would mount a ladder, and scour the top shelves for pamphlets and curious relics of a bygone age, and come down, after an hour's examination, covered with dust and cobwebs. He was not communicative to booksellers, and when any of them would hold up a book, although at the other end of the shop, he seemed to tell from the cover or by intuition what it was all about, and would say 'No,' or 'I have it already,' before the dealer could ask whether he would look at it. If he purchased anything, he was so impatient to have it at home that he would tuck it under his arm and act as his own porter. He was passing one day through the Seven Dials, a locality in London then inhabited by poor authors and literary hacks. Here he bought a handful of ballads from a dealer who was bawling out their contents to a gaping audience. Proceeding on his way home, he was astonished, on suddenly stopping, to find himself surrounded by half a score of urchins, whose faces beamed with expectation. 'Now, then,' said Macaulay, 'what is it?' 'Oh, that is a good one,' replied the boys, 'after we've a-come all this way.' 'But what are you waiting for?' he asked, astonished at their familiarity. 'Waiting for? Why, to hear you sing, to be sure!' Seeing him make the purchase, they imagined that he was going to set up as a balladsinger.

THE RUSSIAN JESTER.

On one occasion, Balakireff, the Russian jester, begged permission of Peter the Great to attach himself to the guard stationed at the palace; and the monarch, for the sake of the joke, consented-warning him at the same time that any officer of the guard who happened to lose his sword, or to be absent from his post when summoned. was punishable with death. The newly-made officer promised to do his best; but the temptation of some good wine sent to his quarters that evening by the czar, 'to moisten his commission,' proved too strong for him, and he partook so freely that he was completely overpowered. While he was sleeping off his debauch, Peter stole softly into the room and carried off his sword. Balakireff missing it on awaking, and frightened out of his wits at the probable consequences, could devise no better remedy than to replace the weapon with his own professional sword of lath, the hilt and trappings of which were exactly similar to those of the guardsmen. Thus equipped. he appeared on parade the next morning, confident in the assurance of remaining undetected if not forced to draw his weapon. But Peter, who had doubtless foreseen this contingency, instantly began storming at one of the men for his untidy appearance, and at length turned round upon the jester with the stern order: 'Captain Balakireff, draw your sword and cut that sloven down! The poor jester, thus brought fairly to bay, laid his hand on the hilt, as if to obey, but at the same time exclaimed fervently: 'Merciful powers! let then my sword he turned into wood!' Then, drawing the weapon, he exhibited in very deed a harmless lath. Even the presence of the czar was powerless to check the roar of laughter which followed. Instead of being put to death for losing his sword, the czar pardoned him, and,

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at his own request, relieved him from further military service.

THREE LINES.

Apelles, the most famous of Greek portrait-painters, once went to Rhodes to visit his contemporary. Proto-Having reached the city, he went immediately to his house, but found that he was not at home. In order to let him understand who had called, he took a brush and drew an exceedingly fine line on a piece of canvas. When Protogenes returned, his housekeeper informed him that a man had called asking for him, but that, instead of leaving his name, he had only made a stroke on the canvas. Taking a look at the line, the painter knew, from its fineness and its beauty, that it could be the production of no other than Apelles. Tracing another with still greater nicety, but of a different colour, above the first, he went out again, after ordering the woman to shew it to the stranger if he should return. Apelles came back immediately after, and drew a third line above the other two, in such a style that it was impossible to make one more delicate. Protogenes, on his return. acknowledged that he was beaten, and that it was not in his power to draw a finer line than this last. His rival called again in a short time, and received a joyous welcome. The piece of canvas was carefully preserved, and became the admiration of posterity, and especially of artists. It was afterwards brought to Rome, and hung up in the Palace of the Cæsars, and people went to behold with astonishment a large piece of canvas with nothing on it but three lines, which, however, were so delicately touched as to be scarcely perceptible. It was ultimately destroyed by a conflagration which broke out in the palace.

AN ELEPHANT'S REVENCE

A French gentleman resident in India had a young elephant which was exceedingly tame and was treated as a pet. It was allowed to roam all over the house, and was accustomed to come into the dining-room after dinner to beg delicacies from the guests. One day when a large party was seated at table taking dessert, the elephant came round, and putting its trunk between the guests, begged from them gifts of fruit. One of the gentlemen refused to give it anything, but the animal would not leave him. At length, being greatly annoyed at the elephant's importunity, he lifted his fork and gave its trunk a smart stab with the prongs. The animal went off and finished its rounds. Shortly after, however, it went into the garden, tore off the branch of a tree which was swarming with large black ants, returned to the room, and shook the branch violently over the gentleman's head. In a moment he was covered with the ants. which bit him severely. They filled his hair, crept down his neck, and crawled up his sleeves. He brushed some of them off, stamped in his anger, shook his clothes, and did his best to rid himself of the annoyance; but he could not manage it, and was obliged to undress and get into a bath to free himself from his tormentors. rest of the guests could not help laughing at the occurrence, and petted the animal more fondly than before.

DUCK-HUNTING IN CHINA.

The lakes and rivers of China abound in wild-fowl, and the ingenious people of that country sometimes adopt the following curious method of catching them. When they see a number of ducks swimming about in any particular piece of water, they send off half-a-dozen

gourds to float down among them. These gourds resemble the melons or pumpkins which are grown in hot-houses in this country, and when hollowed out, they float lightly on the surface of the water. At first the fowls are shy and seem a little afraid of the gourds, but by degrees they get courage. As all birds through time grow familiar with a scarecrow, so the ducks soon gather round the gourds and amuse themselves by pecking at them with their bills. When the birds get pretty familiar with them, preparations are made to deceive them more effectually. A large hollow pumpkin, with holes in it to see and breathe through, is clapped on a man's head. Thus accoutred, he wades slowly into the water, keeping his body under, and letting nothing be seen above the surface but the pumpkin which envelops his head. In this way he moves imperceptibly towards the fowls, which suspect no danger. At last when fairly amongst them, he glides gently up to one of the number, seizes it by the legs and jerks it under the water. He then fastens it to his girdle, and proceeds to the next victim, and so on till he has loaded himself with as many as he can carry. He then quietly leaves the rest of the birds undisturbed, in the hope that he may visit them again and have another day's sport.

FAITH IN GOD'S GOODNESS.

Mungo Park, the celebrated African traveller, was on one occasion in great perplexity, as he saw himself beset on every side by difficulty and danger. He was in the midst of a vast wilderness, in the depth of the rainy season, naked and alone, surrounded by savage animals and still more savage men. He had travelled into the heart of the African continent, and was about five hundred miles from the nearest European settlement. He threw

himself down in despair, and began to brood over the gloomy prospect of a lingering death. Just then his eve was irresistibly caught by the extraordinary beauty of a small tuft of moss just about to shed its tiny seeds. is wonderful how a trifling circumstance will sometimes affect the mind in a state of despondency, for though the whole plant was no larger than the tip of his finger, the traveller could not contemplate the delicate conformation of its roots, leaves, and fruit without admiration. thought within himself: Could He who planted, watered. and brought to perfection, in that obscure part of the world, a plant which appeared so insignificant, look with unconcern on the sufferings and forlorn condition of a creature formed after His own image? Surely not. thought the traveller; and encouraged by the reflection. he at once started up, and disregarding both hunger and fatigue, travelled forward, assured that relief was at hand. In this assurance he was not disappointed, for he soon met in with some friendly natives who treated him with the greatest kindness, and furnished him with the necessaries for prosecuting his journey.

A STRANGE COMPANION.

Although rats are often considered the most repulsive of the lower animals, the following story shews that they can be tamed and will even become attached to man. When the celebrated French author Crebillon was sent to prison at Vincennes, he was awakened the first night by something moving about in his bed. It felt soft and warm, and thinking it was a kitten, he threw it out of the bed and fell asleep again. Next morning he looked everywhere for the kitten, hoping that it might relieve the solitude of his captivity; but he could find no trace of it anywhere. At dinner-time,

however, he suddenly saw an animal sitting on the other side of the table. As the gloom of his cell did not allow of his discerning objects clearly, he supposed this was the kitten making its appearance again. By offering it some food, he enticed it to come nearer him, when, to his horror, he perceived the creature to be a huge rat. could not restrain a cry of astonishment and disgust, at which the turnkey entered to see what was the matter. On learning what had occurred, the attendant burst into a loud laugh, and told the prisoner that a former occupant of the same cell had brought up this rat and tamed it. The turnkey then cried: 'Naton, Naton, come here!' and immediately the rat peeped slyly out of its hole, and as soon as it saw an acquaintance, it jumped upon his arm and began eating some crumbs of bread with great satis-After this Crebillon overcame his dislike for the rat, and indeed became so fond of it, that when he got his liberty, he wanted to take it home with him to Paris: but the turnkey refused to part with it.

GOOD FOR EVIL

A poacher in the Fens of Norfolk, who committed great havoc on the pheasant preserves wherever these were accessible by water, was always baffled at one cover by a dog, which, though quite friendly with the poacher during the day, always gave tongue on his approach at night. The poacher in vain endeavoured to ingratiate himself with the dog, and at last decided to kill it. One morning he enticed it into his punt, and then pulled away with it into a thick forest of reeds. A water-hen rose up from among them and he shot it. The dog at once swam off to fetch it, and on its return with the bird in its mouth, the poacher seized the poor animal by the back of the neck, and tried to drown it by forcing its head und

water. The dog, however, freed itself from his grasp, and made repeated attempts to re-enter the boat, but each time it was thrust back by the poacher, who now stood up and tried to keep its head below the surface with his oar. In one of his efforts, the blade slipped off the dog's back, and over went its would-be destroyer into the water. man could not swim, and after floundering about for a while, sank while uttering a piteous cry for help. dog he would have murdered now seized him and held him up till assistance arrived. He was much exhausted, but recovered; and ever afterwards he abandoned his disreputable calling. He begged the dog from the watcher, who knowing nothing of the black side of the affair. treated the request as purely prompted by gratitude—as doubtless it was. The dog bearing no malice, attached itself to the man whose life it had saved, and never by the slightest expression reminded him of his treachery.

STOLEN GOLD.

Some years ago, when the Kent, an East Indiaman, was on her voyage from England, she caught fire. The most strenuous efforts were made by the crew and passengers to subdue the flames, but in vain. Happily, a sail hove in sight, and the signal of distress was hoisted from the burning vessel. This was observed by the passing ship, which altered her course, and coming alongside, offered to take off the crew and passengers. As the sea was running high at the time, their only way of escape was to lower themselves from the bowsprit by ropes into the boat which lay tossing on the waves below. One of the sailors, knowing that the mate had a large quantity of gold in his possession, determined to secure it and take it with him when he left the ship. Breaking into the mate's cabin, he forced open his desk,

took from it a large number of gold pieces, and stowed them away in a belt which he fastened round his waist. When his turn came to leave the ship, he got out to the end of the boom, slipped down the rope and let go his hold, expecting to drop into the boat beneath. Unfortunately, however, a sudden movement of the waves drifted the boat aside, and he fell into the sea. He was an excellent swimmer, and had he not been heavily laden with the stolen gold, he would soon have risen to the surface and been able to reach the hoat. But the weight of the money in the belt round his waist caused him to sink like lead, and he never once rose to the surface. In his last moments, what would he not have given to be freed from that with which he had so eagerly encumbered himself, but which so unexpectedly proved his destruction!

RESTRAINING ANGER.

A French regiment of hussars was formed, having a new and elegant uniform, the most distinctive part of which was a white jacket braided with gold. The garment was very dear, and young men with slender purses could not often renew it. A young man of good family, though poor, enlisted in this regiment. He went quickly through all the grades, and was at last promoted to be an officer. His parents gave him all their spare money for his equipment. He wore this splendid costume, of which he was not a little proud, for the first time at a dinner at his colonel's. was an intelligent fellow, though very quick-tempered. Placed at table near the mistress of the house on account of his new grade, he began to talk with much gaiety and diverting originality. One of the dishes was served with a thick dark-coloured sauce, and the servant who was performing the butler's functions took up th

dish from the table to carve it. He stooped badly, however; the dish leaned on one side, and all the sauce fell on the young officer's shoulder. In the twinkling of an eye all the consequences of this terrible misfortune presented themselves to his imagination; he saw himself ruined, for he had not the means of buying another suit of regimentals. The blood flew to his face; he got up in a fury, gave his chair a kick, and took his table-napkin by one hand to strike the servant. Happily, his eye meeting that of the colonel fixed upon him, he realised the consequences of what he was about to do. His expression changed as if by enchantment. Instead of striking the stupefied valet, he merely held out the cloth to him, and said in an amiable tone: 'Will you wipe my jacket, please?'

THE SENTINEL AND THE ROBBER.

The Bhattees are an Indian tribe that devote their whole attention to attain perfection in the art of stealing. From their earliest years their youth are trained to endure the greatest fatigue with comparative ease. Among other accomplishments which the young Bhattee must acquire by constant practice, the following are indispensable: he must learn to bleat like a sheep, bark like a dog, crow like a cock, bray like an ass, and imitate the movements of all kinds of animals. He must be able to crawl along the ground, run like a goat or a dog, or stand on his head with his legs extended wide so as to appear in the dusk like the stump of a tree. In connection with this last-mentioned acquirement a story is told of a cavalry sentinel who while standing on duty on one occasion heard something move about the head-ropes of his horse. On looking round he saw what he supposed to be a large dog, which ran between his legs and nearly upset him. He suspected, however, that some requery

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was on foot, and the better to detect it, he placed himself behind what appeared to be the stump of a tree, at no great distance from the spot on which he had been previously standing. He then hung his helmet on the supposed stump, and, bent on the most attentive scrutiny, he placed his head between the two limbs of the tree, so as, unperceived, to command a direct view of the quarter from which the noise had at first proceeded. This, however, was too much for the thief (for such in reality was this would-be tree-stump), who, unable any longer to restrain his laughter, and finding his situation somewhat critical, suddenly performed a somersault, upset the astonished soldier, made clear off with his helmet, and was seen no more.

MURDER DISCOVERED BY BIRDS.

A gentleman who had been robbed by his servant forgave him on condition that he would promise to abandon his bad habits. He did so, and in course of time became the occupier of an inn on a much frequented road. The gentleman happening to travel that way about twenty years after, took up his quarters at the inn kept by his old servant. He did not recognise him at first, but the man made himself known, and expressed his gratification at again having the pleasure of waiting upon him. He gave him the best room in the house, and treated him with the greatest kindness. No sooner, however, had the night set in, than the perfidious wretch, after such a display of attachment, stabbed his guest with a dagger, threw his body into a cart, and conveyed it to a river behind his house. To avoid discovery and prevent the corpse from rising to the surface of the water, he pierced it through with a long sharp stake, which he pushed so far into the mud that only a very small portion of it

was visible. A few days afterwards some ravens collected round the spot. Such an unusual occurrence, and the incessant croaking of the birds, occasioned great surprise among the inhabitants. The pertinacity of the birds was such also that it was vain to attempt driving them away. The excitement and curiosity of the villagers at length led them to examine the spot more closely. With difficulty they managed to draw out the stake, which was no sooner done than the body rose to the surface of the water. Inquiries were made to discover the murderer, and the wheel-marks of the cart having been traced back to the inn, the master was apprehended on suspicion, confessed his crime, and suffered the extreme penalty of the law.

A JUST REBUKE.

An English settler in the backwoods of America was one evening standing at his door, when an Indian, faint and weary, came and asked him for some food. He said roughly: 'I have none for you.' The Indian then asked for beer, and the gentleman again refused. Once more he begged for water; but the man only answered: 'Get you gone, you Indian dog!' The Indian fixed his eyes for a little on the ungenerous settler, and then departed. Some time after this, the same gentleman, while in pursuit of game, lost his way in the woods. He wandered about till at last he saw an Indian hut, which he entered, and asked his way to the place he wished to reach. The Indian said: 'It is a great way off, and the sun will soon go down; you cannot get there to-night, and if you stay in the wood the wolves will devour you; but if you have a mind to lodge with me, you may.' The hunter was very glad to lodge with the kind Indian, and became his guest. The Indian boiled a little venison for him, gave him rum-and-water to drink, and spread out some deerskins that he might sleep on them. In the morning he called the gentleman, and told him that the sun was up, and that the place he wished to reach was a great way off, but that he would act as his guide. The Indian took his gun and went on, while the gentleman followed. When they had gone several miles, the Indian told him that the place was now only two miles off. He then stopped, and turning to the gentleman, said: 'Do you know me?' The gentleman seemed much ashamed, and said: 'I have seen you.' The Indian answered: 'Yes, you have seen me at your own door. And now, on parting, I will make bold to give you a piece of advice. When a poor Indian who is hungry, and thirsty, and faint, again asks you for a little meat or drink, do not say to him: "Get you gone, you Indian dog!"'

AN ACUTE JUDGE.

A Christian merchant having intrusted to a Turkish camel-driver a number of bales of silk to be conveyed from Aleppo to Constantinople, set out with him on the journey. Before they had travelled far, the merchant fell sick, and was unable to go on with the caravan, which in consequence reached the Turkish capital long before him. Some weeks having elapsed without the merchant making his appearance, the camel-driver, supposing that he was dead, sold the silks and betook himself to another occupation. Having recovered his health, the merchant through time arrived at Constantinople, found out the camel-driver after many inquiries, and demanded from him his merchandise. The knave pretended not to know him, and denied that he had ever been a camel-driver. The case was brought before the cadi, and the merchant told how he had intrusted his property to the camel-driver. The latter stoutly denied

all knowledge of the affair, saying that he had never seen the merchant in his life, and had never been a camel-driver. The cadi asked the merchant what proof he could bring forward in support of his assertions. As he was unable to bring any, the cadi exclaimed that they were both fools and bade them go about their business. He then turned his back upon them; but while they were going out together, he opened the window and called out: 'Camel-driver, I want to speak a word with you.' The Turk immediately turned his head, not remembering that he had denied in court that he had ever been a camel-driver. The cadi then compelled him to come back, ordered him to be well bastinadoed, and obliged him to confess his roquery. Thereafter he condemned him to refund to the merchant the value of the silk, and in addition, to pay a considerable fine for the false oath which he had taken during the trial.

THE BENEVOLENT MUSICIAN.

A poor old soldier used to play on the violin every evening in the public gardens of Vienna. His faithful dog accompanied him, and sat holding his master's cap to receive the coppers of the charitable passers-by. One evening the poor man was in great distress, for no one had stopped to listen to his music, and there was not a single coin in his cap. Overcome with grief he sat down on a stone to give vent to his feelings, and covered his face with his hands. Just then a kind-hearted gentleman happening to observe him, came up to him and said: 'Give me your violin and I will play on it a little.' Cheered by the kind tones of the stranger's voice, the old fiddler handed him the instrument. The stranger proceeded to tune it with great care, and having finished the operation, said: 'While I play, you will take the

money.' He did play, and that with such a masterly hand that soon a crowd of eager listeners collected around him. Not copper only but silver also was freely dropped into the old soldier's cap, till at last the dog began to growl impatiently at being obliged to-hold such a heavy load so long in his mouth. 'Who is he?' was the question asked by the listeners. was one of the most famous violin-players in the world, who was thus using his skill to help a poor old soldier. When this became known among the crowd, they raised a hearty cheer for the benevolent musician, who now handed back the instrument to its owner. man looked up in his face in wonder and asked God's blessing on his benefactor. The large sum collected on the occasion placed the old man for many a day above the reach of want; and it would be hard to say which was the happier man that night—the old soldier or the great violin-player, who felt in his heart the satisfaction of having done a good deed.

AN UNUSUAL CUSTOMER.

A fine Newfoundland dog belonging to a clothier was remarkable for his knowledge of the value of money. The entrance to his master's place of business was furnished with two doors, some six or eight feet apart, the outer one being always open in the daytime. A large mat between the two was his constant post, which he never left except when he went to supply himself with provisions at a baker's shop a few doors off. Many of the passers-by used to give him a half-penny, to have the pleasure of seeing him walk off and expend the money in a biscuit. If he happened not to feel hungry just then, he would hide the coin under the mat till his appetite prompted him to spend it. He knew quite

well the difference between a half-penny and a penny, and that he ought to receive two wine-biscuits for the latter and only one for the former. Sometimes when he gave the baker a penny and got two biscuits in return, he would not take them, but would stand still looking gravely up in the man's face, as if there was something wrong. This meant that he wanted only one biscuit on that occasion, and was waiting for the change. Now and then he took a fancy for a roll, by way of variety. At such times, when two biscuits were laid down, or a half-penny and a biscuit, he stood still and took neither; and then his desire being understood. the baker handed him the roll. Once a person gave him a sixpence and accompanied him to the baker's shop to see what he would do. The dog took the change, and having laid it at the feet of the man who gave him the sixpence, he snapped up his two biscuits. He seemed to think that so large a sum was never meant for him. This interesting and intelligent specimen of the canine race was after death stuffed and preserved by his master.

A CLEVER RETRIEVER.

A little boy had for a playmate a fine young retriever. They used to gambol and play together like two brothers, and the dog preferred his young master's company to any other. One day in their rambles they crossed a lake to an island, where they landed without securely fastening the boat to the shore. After amusing themselves some time, they returned to the landing-place, but found that the boat had drifted far out of reach. The passage was too deep and too long for the boy to swim. A night on the damp island, even with his faithful playmate, was not a pleasant prospect, yet it seemed inevitable. After a little reflection, the boy, calling his

dog by name, said: 'Go, fetch the boat.' Immediately the obedient animal plunged into the water and swam round the boat. But it was a heavy flat-bottomed coble, and although he splashed vigorously, his efforts to push it back to the shore were in vain. Giving one vigorous spring, however, he managed to scramble up the side into the boat. Once inside he gave himself a good shake, and then jumped up on to the centre seat on which the rowers sit when pulling the boat. He went up here to have a good view of the bottom of the boat. which had a rough wooden grating over it, and was filled with water. He now cast a rapid glance fore and aft, as if in search of something. All at once he pounced upon the iron chain lying in the bottom of the boat, seized the end of it in his mouth and jumped overboard. Firmly grasping the chain in his teeth, he swam vigorously to the shore, towing the clumsy coble afterhim. His young master joyfully welcomed his arrival on the beach, and taking the chain from him, hauled the boat to the landing-place. They both embarked and left the island, the little fellow praising and caressing his playmate for his ingenuity and thoughtful consideration.

SAVED BY A NUT-SHELL.

An old Swedish count was distinguished for his truthful and upright character. For this reason some wicked men conceived so strong a dislike to him that they conspired together to take away his life. They therefore hired an assassin, who undertook to perpetrate the foul deed. The good old count was altogether ignorant of the danger which threatened him. On the evening when the crime was to be committed, it so happened that his nephews came to pay him a visit. Pleased and gratified with their society, he invited them to partake of some

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fruit-apples, pears, and nuts. When they had departed. he retired to rest, having first committed himself to the protection of God. Meanwhile the assassin, who had secretly obtained an entrance to the palace, crept softly to the room occupied by his intended victim. The good old man lay fast asleep, while a night-lamp burned by his bedside. Armed with a dagger, the wretch raised his arm and approached the bed. Just then a loud cracking noise was heard in the room and the count awoke. Raising himself up and seeing the intruder, he seized a pistol which hung on the wall and presented it at the assassin's head. The wretch took fright on seeing the determined attitude of the count; the dagger dropped from his grasp, and falling on his knees he begged for mercy. He was obliged to surrender himself a prisoner to the servants, who immediately appeared on the alarm being raised. On further examination he disclosed the whole plot and named the accomplices of his crime, who were summarily punished. The count soon saw what had caused the noise that roused him from his slumbers. One of his nephews had by chance let a nut-shell fall on the floor, and the murderer had trampled on it. 'God. I thank Thee,' cried the grateful count, 'that in Thy providence a nut-shell has saved my life, and delivered the evil-doers to the sword of justice!'

A CLEVER MASTIFF.

A tanner at Yarmouth had a mastiff which watched his premises at night. Between the dog and the foreman, who had been employed in the tannery many years, and whose duty it was to see that the animal was regularly fed, there existed the greatest good feeling. The foreman, however, being suspected of dishonesty, was summarily discharged, and another appointed in his stead. From

what afterwards transpired, it appeared that there were ample grounds for doubting the old foreman's integrity. Within a month of his discharge he formed a plan to rob his late employer by removing a cartload of hides from the yard under the cover of night, thinking that the friendship which had so long existed between himself and the watch-dog would prevent the animal from raising any alarm. Carrying out his project, he drove his cart under the walls of the tan-yard in the dead of night, and from the top of his cart managed to clamber over the gate and drop down into the yard. The mastiff recognising the man, offered no resistance, and betokened no surprise at the nocturnal visit, but only followed him closely wherever he went. Having selected as many hides as his cart would hold, he tossed them into it one by one over the wall. Then patting the dog's head, by way of thanking him for his non-interference, he began to scale the gate. This parting act of friendship seemed to convince the dog that there was something suspicious about this stealthy visit; for although there might be some reason for climbing in, there could be no excuse for climbing out, as if all was right the foreman would be likely to make his exit through the gate. So, without troubling his head further about the matter, the dog seized the ex-foreman by the leg, and held him there till the workmen appeared in the morning. Being thus caught in the act, his felonious intentions were beyond doubt, and after trial, summary punishment followed.

A STRANGE PATIENT.

The following extraordinary instance of intelligence in a fish is related by a medical gentleman who lived near Durham. One evening as he was walking in a park, he came to a pond in which fish, intended for th table, were kept alive. He took particular notice of a fine pike, which on observing him darted hastily away. In doing so, however, it struck its head against a nail in a post. As was afterwards discovered, the blow fractured its skull and turned the eyeball on one side. The poor fish seemed to suffer the most intense agony. It rushed to the bottom of the pond, boring its head into the mud and whirling itself round so rapidly that for a short time it was lost to view. then plunged about the pond, and at length threw itself completely out of the water. The doctor on examining it found that a small portion of the brain was protruding through the fractured skull. He put it to rights as well as he could and then put the fish back into the pond. It appeared greatly relieved at first, but in a few moments darted back and forward and plunged about until it threw itself out of the water a second time. The doctor sorted the wound again and returned the pike to its native element. After it had thrown itself out of the pond several times, the doctor made a kind of pillow for it with grass and rushes at the side of the pond, and then left his patient to its fate. On returning to the spot on the following morning, the pike came towards him at the edge of the water and actually laid its head at his foot. The doctor examined the skull and found it going on all right. He then walked backwards and forwards along the edge of the pond for some time, and the fish continued to swim up and down, turning whenever he turned; but being blind on the wounded side of its skull, it always appeared agitated when it lost sight of its benefactor. The next day the kind physician took some young friends to see his strange patient, which came to him as usual. After a while he actually taught it to come at his whistle and take food from him.

THE HEROIC PEASANT.

Several years ago a destructive inundation occurred in the north of Italy, in consequence of an excessive fall of snow on the southern slope of the Alps, followed by a rapid thaw. The river Adige was swollen to such a degree that it carried away the greater part of the stone bridge near Verona. The middle arch only remained, on which stood the house of the toll-gatherer, who with his family was thus imprisoned by the stream, and expected every moment to be swept away by the raging flood. They were observed from the banks stretching forth their hands for aid, and making every effort to attract attention to their perilous position, while fragments of the solitary arch were continually dropping into the impetuous torrent. An Italian nobleman seeing their extreme danger held out a purse of gold as a reward to any one who would take a boat and save the unfortunate family; but so great was the risk of being swept away by the force of the current, or crushed by the crumbling ruins of the bridge, that not one of the vast crowd of spectators had the courage to attempt the rescue. Just then a peasant passing by was informed of the promised reward. Instantly springing into a boat he seized the oars, and by a vigorous and dexterous effort reached the middle of the stream and steered right under the pier of the bridge, where the terrified family were anxiously waiting his approach. means of a rope suspended from the top of the arch the whole family descended into the boat. 'Courage!' cried the peasant; 'now you are safe.' By a still more strentious effort and the skilful management of his deeply laden craft, he brought them all in safety to the shore. 'Brave fellow!' cried the count, presenting him the purse; 'here is your promised reward.' 'I never risk my life for money,' answered the noble peasant; 'my labours afford

a sufficient livelihood for myself, my wife, and children. Give the money to this unfortunate family, who have lost their all.'

A DOG WITH A WIG.

A century ago wigs were worn by almost everybody, and among others by a stout butcher who, accompanied by a very large mastiff, on one occasion went to the theatre to hear Garrick the actor in the part of King Lear. ; He managed to get a front seat in the pit close to the box at the side of the orchestra. The theatre being crowded and the weather intensely warm, the butcher was sadly inconvenienced by his ponderous wig. He accordingly took it off, but was for some time at a loss where to put it. It occurred to him to place it on the head of his dog, which was crouching by his side. He did so, and the animal took to it as kindly as a newly made barrister. As the play proceeded the dog suddenly rose on its hind-legs, and unseen by its master put its fore-paws on the orchestra rail, and surveyed Garrick from beneath the wig with the utmost gravity. The actor was reciting one of the most impressive passages when he caught sight of the grotesque apparition. managed to utter a sentence with due gravity, but at length burst into a most uproarious fit of laughter. The audience thought this was a new reading of the passage, and the house rang with applause. The actors surveyed Garrick and each other with amazement. At length they perceived the cause of the interruption, and all the performers joined in the laugh, at the same time pointing to the butcher, who sat quite unconcerned, believing the whole of the pantomime to be part of the regular performance. After a time the whole house, except the butcher, became aware of the matter, and a gentleman, by way of ending the fun, seized the wig and flung it into the orchestra. The dog sprang after it and sent the terrified musicians flying in all directions. To go on with the scene was out of the question, and the dropping of the curtain became absolutely necessary to the restoration of order. After a short pause, quietness was obtained and the play was acted out to the end.

AVARICE PUNISHED.

A Turkish merchant lost a purse containing two hundred pieces of gold. He sent the town-crier through the city to publish his loss, offering at the same time the half of the contents of the purse to the finder on restoring the lost property. A sailor who had picked up the purse, went to the crier and told him that he had found it, and intimated his willingness to deliver it up to the owner on the proposed conditions. The merchant having thus discovered the finder of his purse, meanly resolved to try to get it back without paying anything. He therefore told the sailor that if he wished to get the reward, he must also restore a valuable emerald which was in the purse. The sailor declared that he had found nothing in the purse except the money, and refused to part with it without receiving the reward. The merchant complained to the cadi, who summoned the sailor to appear and explain why he refused to deliver up the purse. 'Because,' replied he, 'the merchant promised the finder a reward of one hundred pieces, which he now refuses to give, on pretence that the purse contained a valuable emerald, whereas I solemnly declare that in the purse found by me there was nothing but gold.' The merchant was then asked to describe the emerald and how it came into his possession, which he did, but in so confused a manner that the cadi was convinced of his dishonesty. He



accordingly gave the following decision: 'You have lost a purse with two hundred pieces of gold and a valuable emerald in it; the sailor has found one containing only two hundred pieces of gold; therefore this purse cannot be yours. You must therefore have yours cried over again, with a description of the gem which you say it contained.' Turning to the sailor he added: 'You will keep this purse forty days without touching the money, and if at the end of that time no person shall have made good his claim to it, you may justly appropriate it to your own use.'

THE FARMER'S PEARL

Many years ago, before the coinage of Scotland was assimilated to that of England, two Aberdeenshire farmers happened to be returning from market. On coming to the banks of the river Ythan one of them dismounted, while the other retained his seat, and holding the bridle in his hand, stooped forward to let his horse drink from the stream. While in this position he observed, near the place where his companion was standing, a very large mussel, and called to him: 'Reach in the crooked end of your stick, man, and get me that big clam-shell. It will do fine for our Kate when she scrapes her porridge pot.' His comrade did as requested; and the clam was consigned to the farmer's capacious pocket. On getting home it was opened, and found to contain a large and beautiful pearl, which the farmer carefully preserved until he should have an opportunity of disposing of it to advantage. Some time after, when on a visit to London, he took the pearl to one of the principal jewellers in the city, and shewing him the gem, asked him what he thought of it. 'It is very beautiful; it is one of the finest pearls I have ever seen,' said he. 'Will you sell ?' 'O yes,' replied the farmer, 'if I get a good enough price for it.' After some further talk the farmer asked a hundred pounds for it, meaning a hundred pounds Scotch, equal to £8, 6s. 8d. 'It is a beautiful pearl,' said the jeweller; 'but a hundred pounds is a very large price.' The Aberdonian inferred from the jeweller's manner of speaking that the few pounds he had meant to ask for his pearl was much below its value, and at the same time he remembered that the Londoner would understand that he had asked a hundred pounds sterling. He accordingly stuck to his original demand, but now with an altered signification, and said: 'A hundred pounds is the price, take it or want it.' After a little hesitation, the bargain was concluded, and thus the farmer got upwards of £90 more than he had originally asked. The pearl was afterwards sold to the king, and is now one of the gems that adorn the British crown.

THE LION AND THE SHARK.

A young lion which had been reared on board ship became a great favourite with the crew, and was put under the special care of the cabin-boy. The two became great friends, and used to play and roll about the deck on a fine day to the great amusement of the onlookers. On the homeward voyage, shortly after passing the Cape of Good Hope, the ship fell in with a number of sharks. It was a fine calm day, and the passengers and crew attempted to catch one of the monsters. The officers tried to shoot one, and the sailors to harpoon another, but all in vain. At last the sailors got a long rope with a noose at the end of it, which they managed to throw over the head of a shark that approached nearer the vessel than the rest. They then drew the rope tight, and with immense exertion succeeded in hauling the

monster on board, after about six hours' labour. Once on the deck the shark made such use of his tail that no one could venture to go near him. Presently the young lion, seeing a stranger on deck cutting such queer capers, seemed curious to have a near look at him. But his enterprise cost him dear, for the shark snapped at one of his fore-paws. The lion became almost mad with rage and pain, for his foot could not be extricated until the upper and lower jaws of the monster were forced apart. The cabin-boy now became the lion's nurse, washing the injured paw and binding it up, for which attentions the poor creature seemed very grateful. The lion's foot was quite healed by the time the vessel reached England; but the captain was afraid to take the animal to sea again, as it was getting too big to be any longer a pet, and had on several occasions shewn that it still retained some of the ferocity natural to its species. He therefore sold it to the keeper of a menagerie, where it lived many years, going through its various feats for the amusement of the visitors.

AN ARTFUL THIEF.

Marie-Antoinette, Queen of France and wife of Louis XVI., was passionately fond of the opera. Opposite the Queen's box at the Opera-house one evening sat the wife of a rich banker, bedizened with jewels and wearing a pair of magnificent diamond bracelets. So anxious was she to attract the notice of the Queen, that she sat with her hand leaning upon the velvet cushion of the box, so as to shew off the jewels to the greatest advantage. The Queen cast several significant glances at the lady, who was highly delighted with the attention paid to her brilliants. In the course of the evening, a servant, wearing the Queen's livery, knocked at the door of the box, and with many compliments and apologies

from the Queen, begged that Her Majesty might have a closer view of one of the splendid bracelets which every one so much admired. In a moment it was unclasped and delivered to the Queen's messenger. banker's wife was not long, however, in discovering that the supposed Queen's messenger was none other than an ingenious thief, who, observing the lady's efforts to attract attention, had assumed the guise of an attendant on Her Majesty, and thus obtained the bracelet. police were soon apprised of the loss; and next morning the lady was made happy by receiving a note from the superintendent of police stating that the thief had been captured and the bracelet recovered, and requiring her either to send the other bracelet by the lieutenant of police to identify the one recovered, or come herself with it to the office. Not caring to go out so early in the day, she gave the other bracelet to the officer, cautioning him to take great care of it. In an hour or two, however, she found that both of her bracelets were The rogue who had obtained the one at the theatre by personating a Queen's messenger, had got the other from herself by feigning himself to be a lieutenant of police. The thief no doubt displayed great ingenuity, but we cannot help wishing that it had been employed in some more honourable calling.

HONESTY.

In a village near St Petersburg there lived a poor German woman who gained a livelihood by entertaining ship-masters on their way to the capital. Several Dutch captains having supped at her house one evening, she found, when they were gone, a sealed bag of money under the table. One of the company had forgotten it; but they had sailed over to Cronstadt, and the wind beir

fair, there was no chance of their putting back to claim the money. The good woman put the bag into her cupboard till she should find the owner. Seven years passed away and no one claimed it; and though often tempted to make use of the contents, her good principles prevailed, and it remained untouched. One evening some shipmasters again stopped at her house for refreshment. Three of them were English and the fourth a Dutchman. In the course of conversation one of them asked the Dutchman if he had ever been in that town before. deed I have,' replied he: 'I know the place but too well; my being here once before cost me seven hundred rubles.' 'How so?' asked the Englishmen. 'Why, in one of these wretched hovels I once left behind me a bag containing that sum of money.' 'Was the bag sealed?' asked the old woman, who was sitting in a corner of the room, and whose attention was roused by the subject of 'Yes, it was sealed with this very seal conversation. which hangs from my watch-chain,' replied the captain. The woman knew the seal at once, and slipping out of the room, presently returned with the bag. 'See here,' said she, throwing the bag on the table: 'honesty is not so rare perhaps as you imagine.' The guests were astonished, and the owner of the bag, as may be supposed, highly delighted. Seizing the bag, he tore open the seal, took out one ruble (worth about three shillings and fourpence) and laid it on the table as a reward for the hostess, at the same time thanking her civilly for the trouble she The three Englishmen were amazed and had taken. indignant at his offering so small a reward, and warmly remonstrated with him for his meanness. The old woman declared that she required no recompense for merely doing her duty, and begged the Dutchman to take back even his But the Englishmen insisted on seeing justice done, saying that the woman had acted nobly, and ought to be well rewarded. At length the Dutchman agreed to part with a hundred rubles, which were counted out and given to the old woman, who thus at length was hand-somely rewarded for her honesty.

THE POWER OF KINDNESS.

William Penn, the founder of the colony of Pennsylvania, was distinguished for his justice and humanity in treating with the native Indians whose territory he came to occupy. After his first purchase he wished to obtain another portion of their lands, and offered to buy it. It was accordingly agreed that in exchange for a certain quantity of goods. Penn should have as much land as a young Englishman could walk round in a day. After the land had been measured in this primitive manner, the Indians seemed greatly dissatisfied, for the youth had walked much faster and farther than they had expected. On asking the cause of their dissatisfaction, Penn received as answer: 'The walker cheated us.' 'How can that be?' said Penn. 'Did not you yourselves choose to have the land measured in that way?' 'True,' replied the Indians; 'but white brother make a big walk.' Some of the colonists insisted that the Indians should be compelled to abide by the terms of the bargain. pelled!' exclaimed Penn; 'how can you compel them without bloodshed?' Then turning to the Indians, he said: 'Well, brothers, if we have given you too little for the land, how much more will satisfy you?' They were pleased with this proposal, and asked for some additional cloth and fish-hooks, which were cheerfully given. The red men of the forest then shook hands with Penn and retired perfectly satisfied. When they were gone, the governor, looking round on his friends, exclaimed: 'Oh, how cheap and powerful a thing is kindness! Some

you spoke of compelling these poor creatures to abide by their bargain; I have compelled them—but by another and mightier power than that of the sword—the power of kindness.' Penn's justice and kindness did not pass unrewarded. The red men became the warm friends of the white stranger, and towards him and his followers they buried the war-hatchet. And when the colony of Pennsylvania was pressed for provisions during a time of scarcity, the Indians cheerfully came forward to its assistance with the produce of their hunting.

JUST IN TIME.

A gentleman who held the office of Under-secretary of State was one night annoyed by a most unaccountable wakefulness. He was in perfect health, had dined early and moderately, and had no special anxiety preying on his mind. Still he could not sleep, and from eleven till two in the morning had never closed an eye. It was summer, and daylight had already appeared, when he resolved to dissipate his sleeplessness by breathing the morning air in the park. There he saw no one but sleepy sentinels, whom he rather envied. He passed the Home Office several times, and at last, without any particular object in view, resolved to let himself in with his pass-key. The book of entries of the previous day lay open on the table, and in sheer listlessness he began to read. The first entry appalled him-'A reprieve to be sent to York for the coiners ordered for execution tomorrow.' It at once occurred to him that he had received no reply to his order to send the reprieve, and on searching his desk he could find no trace of it. In alarm he went to the house of the chief clerk, aroused him, and asked him if he knew anything of the reprieve being sent off. The chief clerk said that he had sent it to the clerk of the crown, whose duty it was to forward it. 'But have you his receipt and certificate that it is gone?' asked the secretary. Being told that he had not, they both set off to the house of the clerk of the crown. On reaching it. they found him stepping into his gig to drive to his country villa, some miles out of London. Astonished at. the visit of the Under-secretary at such an early hourabout four c'clock in the morning-he was still more so at his business. With an exclamation of horror, the clerk of the crown cried: 'The reprieve is locked up in my desk.' It was brought, and as there were no railways or telegraphs in those days, it was immediately despatched by a trusty and fleet messenger on horseback, who reached York just at the moment the unhappy culprits were ascending the cart which was to convey them to the scaffold. The unaccountable sleeplessness of the government official was thus the means of saving the culprits from execution.

PROOF POSITIVE

A gentleman residing in London lost a favourite Skye terrier named Lizzie; five weeks elapsed and the gentleman gave up all hopes of ever seeing his dog again. On the sixth week he was passing through a district of the city in which there are many shops occupied by dog-fanciers; in one of these, chancing to see as he supposed his long-lost dog, he entered and claimed her. The shop-keeper refused to give her up, declaring that the dog had been in his possession for the past twelve months. So certain, however, was the gentleman that the dog was really his, that he applied to a magistrate to assist him in regaining his property. The dog-fancier was summoned to appear in court and shew cause why he detained the dog. When the case came on for trial, he brough

witnesses with him, who stated among other things that the dog's name was not Lizzie, but Flo. The gentleman also produced witnesses who asserted that the dog in question was Lizzie, and that they had seen her in the gentleman's possession at various periods during the last six months. In consequence of the conflicting evidence, it occurred to the magistrate that the animal herself might prove the best witness as to whose property she really was, and with this view he ordered her to be brought into the court. She was placed in the arms of the dog-fancier, who called her his Flo, and petted and caressed her. sooner, however, did she see the gentleman's wife standing in the witness-box than she struggled to get to her, and manifested her affection for the lady in an unmistakable manner. Succeeding in effecting her escape, she sprang to the ledge of the witness-box and began to jump on the lady's shoulders and lick her face, shewing the greatest joy at meeting her again. The shopkeeper made energetic attempts to coax back the dog, but these signally failed, amidst the derision of the spectators. Lizzie heeded him not, but kept springing towards the lady, giving conclusive evidence that she had found her old mistress again. The magistrate said that there was not a shadow of a doubt that the animal had proved her own identity, and immediately ordered her to be given up to the gentleman, much to the chagrin of the dog-fancier and his witnesses.

INDECISION.

During a violent storm a vessel drifted on a rocky shore on the west coast of England, and immediately became a total wreck. Most of the crew perished, but the captain and his wife reached a solitary rock, and clambered up its slippery sides to escape the violence of the waves. But here they were not beyond the reach of

danger. Their place of shelter was separated from the mainland by a deep channel, where the sea rushed with terrific violence between the rugged cliffs on each side. The cold was intense, and they stood exposed to all its fury. The tide was rising rapidly, and night was drawing on. It was plain that unless assistance came promptly from the shore, they could not hope to survive many hours. Happily they were descried from the land, and a boat was immediately launched to attempt their rescue. For the boat to approach the rock was found impossible, and the only alternative was to project a rope to the sufferers from the shore by means of a rocket, and then to haul them through the surf within reach of the boat. After many fruitless attempts, the rope was at last landed on the rock. The captain seized it, while another rope was soon sent on by means of the first, and one was fastened round the body of each survivor. The breakers with every successive roll surged up to their very feet, but on receding laid bare the broken jagged rocks which spread out below. It was clear that their only chance of escape was to spring into the wave at the moment of its highest swell, and being thus borne over the danger, the boat's crew would be on the alert to pull them on board at once. The lady first made the attempt, having been instructed how to act. All was now ready. The big wave rolled full at her feet. 'Now, now!' shouted the excited crew. 'Spring into the wave!' urged her husband with passionate energy. Alas! she trembled, hesitated, delayedonly a moment, but that moment was fatal. She leaped into the receding wave, fell upon the rugged rocks beneath, and the next moment was dragged on board a mangled and lifeless corpse. The captain, ignorant of her hapless fate, sprang into the next advancing wave, but took it at the swell and was saved.

A SLIGHT MISTAKE

An Englishman being on a visit to Rome, went one night to see the Coliseum by moonlight. While alone under the dark arches, all of a sudden a man wearing a long cloak brushed past him rather rudely and passed on into the darkness. The gentleman's first impulse was to clap his hand on his watch-pocket. Sure enough he found that his watch was not there, and at once jumped to the conclusion that it had been stolen by the stranger who had jostled him so rudely. The Englishman rushed after him, and seizing him by the collar, demanded his watch. He could speak very little Italian, and understood none when spoken, so he kept shaking the foreigner by the collar, and shouting 'Orologio! Orologio!' (the Italian word for watch). The man thus attacked poured forth a torrent of rapidly spoken words, of which his assailant understood not one syllable. Again administering a severe shaking to his captive, he stamped his foot angrily on the ground, and vociferated 'Orologio! Orologio!' Upon this the Italian drew forth a watch and handed it to his captor. The Englishman happy in having as he thought, recovered his property, and not caring to pursue the matter any further, turned on his heel as he pocketed the watch, and saw nothing more of the man. On returning to his lodgings, however, his landlady met him at the door, holding out something in her hand, and saying: 'O sir, you left your watch on the table, so I thought it better to take care of it till your return. Here it is.' 'Good gracious! What is this then?' stammered the Englishman, drawing from his pocket the watch he had got from the strange Italian. It was a watch he had never seen before. The truth now flashed upon his mind—he had been a robber! The poor man had so violently attacked in the darkness and solitude

of the Coliseum had been terrified into surrendering his own watch to the resolute ruffian who, as he thought, had pursued and robbed him. Next morning the Englishman, not a little crest-fallen, hastened to the police-office with the watch and told his story. 'Ah, I see,' said the officer on duty; 'you had better leave the watch with me. I will make your excuses to its owner, who has already been here telling us how you robbed him.' The Englishman retired, thankful that his slight mistake was so easily rectified.

'HELP.'

A gentleman in Lanarkshire had a watch-dog named 'Help,' which was usually kept chained 'up. For some time repeated losses had taken place among the sheep. some of which were found torn and mangled, but only partially devoured. Every effort to trace the secret enemy proved in vain. At last, while the gentleman was walking one day on the banks of a little river which flowed at the foot of the pasture hill, he noticed his dog, which he supposed to be safely chained near the house, running down the slope. As the dog drew near, it was seen that his mouth and fangs were covered with blood. The gentleman concealed himself so that he might watch unobserved what would follow. The dog walked into the river, dipped his face in the water, and shook his head backwards and forwards, until he thought that all traces of his guilt were removed. He then proceeded to the house, his master following at a little distance. dog went to his kennel, and, with the help of his paws, put on his collar, which was lying with the chain on the The gentleman walked up to him and said: 'Help, my poor fellow, there is no help for you.' He then went away, and gave the necessary orders for the dog's execution. But when the servant came to les

him to his doom, the collar was once more empty, and 'Help' was never more heard of in the county. It is plain that the dog must have perfectly understood the meaning, if not the exact words, of his master's speech. No reproaches had been used; but he felt himself detected, and understood that he would have to suffer for his crime if he did not abscond.

HONESTY THE BEST POLICY.

Some years ago there lived in a country village a poor but worthy clergyman, who had to support himself, a wife, and seven children on the small stipend of forty pounds a year. One day when walking through the fields and meditating in much distress on his straitened circumstances, he found a purse of gold which had been unwittingly dropped by some passer-by. Seeing no one near likely to claim it, he carried it home and shewed it to his wife, who advised him to use it, or at least a portion of it, in extricating them from their present difficulties. The honest clergyman, however, refused to appropriate any of the money until he had used every effort to find out its owner, reminding his wife of the proverb that honesty is always the best policy. After a short time the purse was claimed by a gentleman who resided at some little distance; but on returning it, the finder received no other reward than thanks. On the good man's return home after restoring the money, his wife could not refrain from reproaching the owner of it with ingratitude, and at the same time censuring what she called the over-scrupulous honesty of her husband. In reply he only quoted the well-known saying: 'Honesty is always the best policy.' A few months afterwards, the poor but honest curate received an invitation to dine with the gentleman whose money he had found. After hospitably entertaining his guest, the gentleman gave him the presentation to a living worth three hundred a year, at the same time putting into his hands a cheque for fifty pounds to relieve his present necessities. The curate having thanked his benefactor, returned with joy to his wife and family, and acquainted them with the happy change in their circumstances. Addressing his wife, he added that he hoped she was now convinced that in their case honesty had proved to be, as it always is, the best policy.

A STRANGE HIDING-PLACE.

A few years since a fox frequently led his pursuers a fruitless chase in the direction of Hawthornden, on the banks of the Esk, and it was noticed that the dogs always lost the scent at a particular spot on the margin of the This was at a place where some huge blocks of stone lay in the bed of the stream. Here Revnard seemed always to take to the water; but to discover where or how he got out again, puzzled all the attempts of the hunters. At length, one day, when the same thing happened again, the huntsman observed a collier cutting broom on the bank of the river, immediately above the spot where the fox had disappeared. Thinking that he must have noticed the route taken by the fugitive, he rode up to him and asked him if he had seen it. The man replied that he had, but declined to tell where it was, unless he got a reward. The other huntsmen having now come up, and learning how matters stood, subscribed a shilling each as a bribe to get the collier to reveal his secret. No sooner had he fingered the money, than he pointed to one of the large stones in the bed of the river. Upon the surface of the stone lay the fox extended at full length, but so still and flat that,

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with the corresponding colour of the brown stone and his own dun hide, his presence could be detected only by the closest attention. His ingenuity, however, was thus at last baffled. He was driven from his hiding-place, and fell a prey to his canine foes. It seems he had been previously observed by several other persons to resort to the same curious expedient, but their admiration of his cunning had always prevented them from divulging the secret. They had also noticed that the sagacious creature, in laying himself down on the stone, always studied the direction of the wind, placing himself so that it would blow along the hair; as, if he had placed himself the opposite way, the wind would have ruffled his fur, and he might have been more easily observed.

PRECIOUS BURDENS.

The city of Weinsberg was besieged by Conrad, emperor of Germany, about the middle of the twelfth century. The inhabitants offered a stout resistance, and held out long and bravely; but at last the attacks of the enemy were successful and the city surrendered. The victorious emperor, enraged at the sturdy Weinsbergers for thwarting him so long in his plans to take their city. declared that he would put to the sword every man within the walls. In vain a crowd of women tried to soften the heart of the emperor, pointing out to him the miserable condition to which they would be reduced if their protectors and bread-winners were so suddenly taken from them. One boon, however, the emperor offered them. Each woman was to be allowed to bring out of the town as much of whatever she considered most valuable as she could carry in her arms or on her shoulders. At first the poor women regarded this as a very small concession, and kept bemoaning the impending fate of their

nearest and dearest. But one of quicker wit than the rest plucked up courage, and a whisper went round which soon revived their fainting hearts. At length the dreadful day arrived when the women were to quit their native city, and their husbands to suffer for their opposition to the will of the wrathful emperor. The gates of the city opened and the throng poured forth, heavily laden indeed, but bearing neither gold nor household goods. Each true wife hore on her shoulders her doomed husband, and carried him out of the city, the safety of her burden being guaranteed to her by the word of an emperor. There was murmuring among the besieging host when this unexpected sight met their eyes. Their emperor had not meant this: it was an evasion of his decree, they said, and could not stand. But Conrad. with all his severity, carried no heart of stone within his His word was pledged, and he could not draw back. The men were saved; and to this day the Weinsberg wives hold an honourable place in the memory of their countrymen.

MONKEYS' VENGEANCE.

Two travellers while passing along one of the parched plains of India sat down under the shade of a large banyan-tree to partake of some refreshment. In the midst of their meal they were disturbed by a troop of black-faced monkeys, which took possession of the branches of the tree, chattering and jumping about in the liveliest manner. They seemed angry at the travellers for sitting under the tree, but by and by they quieted down a little. As the men rose to resume their journey, they were surprised to see a young monkey fall down at their feet quite dead. Upon this, a deafening clamour arose among the monkeys, and their looks and

gestures made it apparent that they suspected the travellers of being the cause of their juvenile comrade's death. But they also seemed at a loss to account for the death as caused by them, for the men were unarmed. Meanwhile, one monkey, apparently the leader of the whole tribe, separated himself from the rest, ran to the spot on the branch from which the young monkey had fallen, and examined it carefully. After smelling the branch, he glided nimbly down one of the pendent roots with which the banyan is so amply furnished, and came to the corpse of the dead monkey. Taking it up, he examined it minutely, especially the shoulder, where there was a small wound. Laying down the dead animal, he turned his eyes in every direction, as if to detect the murderer among the leaves. After a little while, something seemed to catch his eye, and the next moment he had mounted the tree, sprung to the spot, and with one clutch had seized a long whip-snake, with which he hastened to the ground, speedily followed by the whole rabble. As many as could find room then ranged themselves on both sides of the snake, each monkey tightly clutching the skin of the back with its hand. At a given signal, the executioners dragged the body of the writhing snake backwards and forwards on the ground till nothing of the murderer was left but the backbone. Having so summarily avenged the death of their companion, they ascended the tree, and soon were out of sight.

NEGRO HOSPITALITY.

When Mungo Park, the celebrated African traveller, arrived at Sego, on the banks of the Niger, he was directed by one of the native kings to pass the night in a certain village. On going thither he found, to his great mortification, that no person would admit him into

his hut. Turning his horse loose to graze, he was preparing, as a security against the attacks of the wild beasts which abounded in the neighbourhood, to climb up a tree and sleep among the branches. Just then, however, a negro woman, returning from the labours of the field, stopped to look at him, and observing his weary and dejected appearance, inquired into his condition. Having explained it to her, with looks of great compassion she took up his saddle and bridle, and told him to follow her. She led him to an apartment in her hut, lighted a lamp, spread a mat on the floor, and told him that he might remain there for the night. Finding that he was hungry, she procured for him a fine fish, which she broiled upon some embers, and gave him for supper. She then desired her maidens, who had been gazing in fixed astonishment on the white man, to resume their task of spinning cotton, which they continued to ply during the great part of the night. They cheered their labours with a song, which must have been composed extempore, as the traveller, with feelings of deep emotion, discovered that he himself was the subject of it. It was sung by one of the young women, the rest joining in a sort of chorus. The air was sweet and plaintive, and the words, literally translated, were these: 'The winds roared and the rains fell. The poor white man, faint and weary, came and sat under our tree. He has no mother to bring him milk, no wife to grind his corn.' Chorus, Let us pity the white man; no mother has he to bring him milk, no wife to grind his corn.' The forlorn and wav-worn traveller was so deeply affected by such unexpected kindness that sleep fled from his eyes. Next morning he could not depart without requesting his compassionate host to accept, as the only recompense it was in his power to make her, two of the four brass buttons that still remained on his waistcoat.

A LOST NOTE

The following extraordinary affair happened about the One of the directors of the Bank of Engvear 1740. land, a very rich man, had occasion to require £30,000, which he was to pay as the price of an estate that he had just bought. To facilitate the matter, he obtained from one of the officials a bank-note for that amount. On his return home he was suddenly called out on particular business, and threw the note carelessly on the mantel-piece; but when he came back a few minutes afterwards to lock it up, it was not to be found. As no one had entered the room during his absence, he could not suspect any person of having stolen it. At last, after much ineffectual search, he was persuaded that the note must have fallen from the mantel-shelf into the fire. The director went to acquaint his colleagues with the misfortune that had happened to him; and as he was known to be a perfectly honourable man, he was readily believed. It was only about twenty-four hours from the time he had deposited the money; they thought, therefore, that it would be hard to refuse his request for a second bill. He received it upon giving an obligation to restore the first bill, if it should ever be found, or to pay the money himself, if it should be presented by any stranger. About thirty years afterwards when the director was in his grave, and his heirs in possession of his fortune, an unknown person presented the lost bill at the bank, and demanded payment. was in vain that the officials told him of the transaction by which that bill was annulled; he would not listen to it. He maintained that it came to him from abroad. · and insisted upon immediate payment. The note was payable to bearer, and the £30,000 were reluctantly handed to him. The heirs of the deceased director

would not listen to any demands for restitution, and the bank was obliged to sustain the loss. It was discovered afterwards that an architect, having purchased the director's house, and taken it down in order to build another upon the same spot, had found the note in a crevice of the chimney, and used his discovery as a means of robbing the bank.

'COMPENSATION.

In the reign of Frederick the Great of Prussia there lived near the town of Küstrin an honest miller named Arnold. His mill was plentifully supplied with water at the time when he entered upon his lease, and he paid his rent regularly and supported himself and his family in comfortable circumstances for six years. At the end of this time his landlord, Count Schmidt, wishing to enlarge a fish-pond which lay near his mansion, cut a canal from the stream a short distance above the mill. for the purpose of conveying water into the pond. Foreseeing the injury this would do to his business, the miller remonstrated with the count, and entreated that if the canal must remain he might be permitted to break his lease. This reasonable request being refused, the current of the stream was so much lessened that the mill could only be worked during the floods which followed violent rains. The miller applied to a court of law for redress, but sentence was pronounced against him. After much anxiety from his increasing debts, all his goods and chattels were seized and sold to pay the arrears of rent and a long lawyer's bill. By the advice of his friends, who knew the just and benevolent character of their sovereign, he presented a short memorial on the subject to His Majesty. Frederick was much struck by the simplicity of the poor man's story, and immediately

despatched a private agent to Küstrin to examine into the merits of the case. The king at the same time revised all the evidence and pleadings before the court and the whole of the law proceedings. He likewise consulted several of his veteran cabinet advisers upon the matter before he finally determined what course to pursue. Having come to a decision, he summoned the judges of the court and the counsellors who had approved and signed Arnold's sentence. He criticised their conduct severely, shewed them the injustice of their decision, and dismissed them from their several offices. were then prosecuted for corruption and partiality; and a sum equal to the produce of the miller's effects and the cost of the lawsuit was deducted from the salaries of all who had any share in the unjust decree. Count Schmidt was ordered to reimburse to his late tenant all the rent he had received from the time of the canal being first opened. The miller was soon re-established in a flourishing business, and always cherished a grateful remembrance of brave old Fritz, as his soldiers used to call him.

THE STOLEN SEALS.

When the Emperor of Siam appoints any of his subjects to the magistracy, he gives him a bunch of seals as the insignia of his office, and these are regarded as marks of the high dignity to which their possessors have been raised. The seals given to princes who act as magistrates are made of gold; the mandarins have silver ones; and those held by the ordinary magistrates are of copper or lead. None of these officers, high or low, exercises his functions legally and publicly, unless the seals are in his possession. It so happened on one occasion that the president of a Siamese tribunal incurred the hatred of the commander of the troops in his district, and the latter

stole the magistrate's seals by way of revenge. Because of his loss the magistrate was obliged to cease from the discharge of his official duties. If it were known that his seals had been lost, he was liable to severe punishment for carelessness. To avoid this, he feigned illness and remained for a while shut up in his own house. At last the people of the place suspected that this was not the real cause of his retirement, and lodged a complaint with the viceroy of the province, because in the absence of the magistrate no business could be conducted in the court. On being asked to explain the cause of his inactivity, the president confessed the strange predicament in which he was placed owing to the robbery of his seals. At the same time he mentioned his suspicion that they had been somehow abstracted by his deadly enemy the commandant of the troops. The viceroy believed the truth of the story at once, for he held the president in high respect. He therefore suggested to him a plan for the recovery of his seals. 'Go,' said he, 'and set your house on fire. The commander of the troops must come as in duty bound to try to extinguish the flames. When he appears before your house, go down and place in his hands, for safe keeping, the box in which your seals were usually kept. He will know that he is answerable for its return, but he will be afraid to bring it back empty; and to save himself from being charged with allowing the seals to be lost through his negligence, he will, after the fire is extinguished, likely return the box with the seals of which you suspect him to have robbed you. Should he give back the box without the seals, you can bring an action against him for their recovery; but it is likely he will understand the difficulty of his situation and never run the risk.' It turned out just as the ingenious viceroy expected, for the day after the conflagration the commander of the troops handed him the box with the

seals in it. By the help of the viceroy he soon erected a new dwelling for himself, and continued the regular discharge of his magisterial duties.

THE CAPTORS CAPTURED.

During one of the wars between England and France, a fine ship, laden with a valuable cargo, was on a voyage to America. The vessel had a strong and efficient crew, but was totally unarmed. When near her destined port, she was chased by a French privateer. Her commander put forth every effort to escape, but the French ship being a faster sailer, he soon saw that capture was inevitable. He thereupon retired quietly into his own room below to arrange his papers preparatory to surrender. The cabin-boy, a youth of activity and enterprise, followed him, and asked if nothing more could be done to save the ship. The captain replied that all that it was possible to do had been done to avoid capture, but in vain, and now there was nothing for it but to allow themselves to be taken prisoners. The lad then returned upon deck and summoned the crew around him. briefly told them their captain's conclusion, but added: 'If you will place yourselves under my command and obey my orders, I have formed a plan by which our ship may be rescued and we in turn become the conquerors. Inspired by the courage of their youthful but gallant leader, the sailors readily consented. He told them his plan, which commended itself to them, and they only waited for the proper moment to carry their enterprise into effect. Their suspense was of short duration, for the Frenchman was soon alongside, and as the weather was fine, immediately grappled fast to the helpless merchantman. The victors, overjoyed at the acquisition of such a fine prize, poured into the vessel in great disorder, cheering and huzzaing, and not foreseeing any danger, left but a few men on board their own ship. Now was the time for action. At the given signal, the cabin-boy, followed by the crew, jumped on board the Frenchman, threw off the grappling-irons, seized what weapons they could lay hands on, and soon overpowered the few men left on board. Seizing the helm, and placing the privateer out of boarding distance, he hailed the discomfited Frenchmen who were left on board the vessel he had just quitted, and summoned them to follow in his wake, or he would blow them out of the water-a threat which they knew too well he was quite able to carry out, for the guns had been loaded during the chase. They could not help themselves, and the gallant sailor-lad steered into port followed by his wouldbe conquerors. The exploit excited universal applause. and the brave boy was at once transferred to the British navy as a midshipman. He soon distinguished himself in action, and received rapid promotion, until at length he was created an admiral, and became known as Sir Charles Wager.

THE BATTLE OF THE CLANS.

About the year 1392 a serious feud broke out between two Highland clans, and it was agreed that the difference should be decided by a combat between thirty men of the clan Chattan and the same number of the clan Kay. The battle was to take place on the North Inch of Perth, a level meadow partly surrounded by the river Tay; and it was to be fought in the presence of King Robert III. and his nobles. On the appointed day, the two parties, armed with sword and target, axe and dagger, stood waiting the signal for the fight. At that moment, however, the leader of the Chattans observed that one of his men, whose heart had failed him, had

deserted his standard. As there was no time to seek another man from the clan, the chieftain was obliged to offer a reward to any one who would take the fugitive's place. Upon this, Hal o' the Wynd, a blacksmith by trade, a little bandy-legged man, but of great strength and activity, and skilled in the use of the broadsword, offered for half a French crown to fill the vacant place. The signal was given, and the two parties fell on each other with the utmost fury. As they fought with two-handed swords, the wounds inflicted were deep Heads were cleft asunder and limbs and ghastly. were lopped from the trunk. The meadow was soon red with blood and covered with dead and wounded men. In the midst of the deadly conflict, the leader of the clan Chattan noticed that Hal o' the Wynd, after he had slain one of the clan Kay, stood aside and seemed unwilling to fight more. 'How is this?' said he. you afraid?' 'Not I,' answered Hal; 'but I think I have done enough of work for half a crown.' 'Forward and fight!' said the Highland chief. 'Him that doth not grudge his day's work, I shall not stint in his day's wages.' Thus encouraged, Hal again plunged into the thickest of the fight, and by his excellence as a swordsman contributed not a little to the victory which at length fell to the clan Chattan. Ten of the victors. with Gow Chrom-or the bandy-legged smith, as Hal was called in Gaelic-were left alive, but all badly wounded. Only one of the Kays survived, and he was unhurt. Not daring to oppose himself to eleven wounded combatants, he threw himself into the Tay and swam to the other side. He then went home to the Highlands, carrying the news of his clan's defeat. It is said that his kinsmen were so angry with him for not fighting to the very last, and trying to revenge the slaughter of his fellow-clansmen, that he was put to death for his cowardice. Hal was well rewarded for his services; but when the battle was over, it was found that he could not tell the name of the clan for which he had fought, but replied that he had been fighting for his own hand. Hence the origin of the proverb—'Ilka man for his ain han', like Hal o' the Wynd.'

GENEROSITY.

Montesquieu, the celebrated French author, being at-Marseilles, hired a boat with the intention of sailing for pleasure. He entered into conversation with the twoyoung boatmen, and was surprised to learn that they were silversmiths by trade, but that, when released fromtheir usual occupation, they employed themselves as watermen in order that they might increase their earnings. The gentleman expressed his surprise at their conduct. and his fears that they were prompted by an avaricious disposition. 'O sir,' said one of them, 'if you knew all the circumstances of our case, you would not judge us so harshly. Our father, anxious to better the condition of his family, scraped together all that he was worth. and purchased a vessel for the purpose of trading to the coast of Barbary; but, unfortunately, he was taken by pirates, carried to Tripoli, and sold for a slave. He writes us that he has happily fallen into the hands of a kind master, but that the sum demanded for his ransom is so exorbitant that it will be impossible for him ever to raise it. He adds that we must therefore abandon all hope of ever seeing him again, and be resigned to our loss. In the hope of restoring to his family a beloved father, we are striving, by every honest means in our power, to collect the sum necessary for his ransom; and for this end we are not ashamed to act during our spare time in the humble capacity of watermen.' The gentlemar

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was struck with this account, and on his departure made them a handsome present. Some months afterwards, the two brothers, when at work in their shop as usual, were greatly surprised at seeing their father enter. He threw himself into their arms in a transport of joy. At the same time, he expressed his fears that they had taken some unjust method to obtain the money for his ransom, as he thought it too large a sum for them to have saved from their ordinary earnings. They declared their ignorance of the whole affair, and could only surmise that they owed their father's release to the distinguished stranger to whose generosity they had recently been so much indebted, and to whom they had related the story of their misfortunes. After Montesquieu's death, an account of the affair was found among his papers, stating the amount remitted to Tripoli for the old man's ransom, and thus setting at rest all doubt as to the source of the generous act.

THE REAL AND THE COUNTERFEIT.

In the reign of Catherine II. of Russia, the rage for magnificence among the Muscovite nobles was excessive, and the value of precious stones was enormously enhanced. While this passion was at its height, a stranger appeared in Moscow wearing a most superbring on his finger. Immediately the eyes of all were dazzled, and more especially those of a wealthy nobleman, who was known to indulge his fancy for precious stones at any cost. Meeting the stranger, he offered him a very large price for the ring, which was civilly refused, on the ground that he had no wish to part with it. This only increased the eagerness of the jewel-hunter, and at length the stranger, to evade his importunities, told him very frankly that he would not sell it, because

the stones were not genuine. This statement excited the astonishment of all present, but of none more than of the nobleman, who esteemed himself an accomplished connoisseur in the matter of gems. He offered to deposit a sum of money in the hands of the owner on condition of having the ring intrusted to him for a few days, in order to have it tested. Different jewellers were consulted, but they all agreed that the stones were pure and The ring was returned in the specified time. and negotiations were begun afresh, the owner persisting in his refusal to sell, and the nobleman continuing to bid higher every time. At length he offered a sum far above its real value. 'The ring,' said the stranger, 'is a token of friendship, but I am unable to resist the temptation of so great a price for it. I must, however, repeat that the stones are counterfeit, and I think you very foolish in persisting in your intention to purchase my ring at so enormous a price.' 'If that is your only objection,' replied the enthusiastic lord, laying a bundle of banknotes on the table, 'here, take the money; and I call the gentlemen present to bear witness that I voluntarily, and after due consideration, conclude the bargain.' The stranger took the money, and as he handed the ring to its new owner, repeated the warning that the stones were false, and that he was still ready to cancel the bargain. The nobleman was too much overjoyed at his acquisition to heed this last asseveration, but hastened home to gloat over its brilliant properties. But alas! he soon found out that the words of the stranger were too true. Instead of the genuine ring, a false one exactly similar in appearance had been substituted. The affair was brought into a court of justice, but as the seller proved that he had told the nobleman all along that the stones were not genuine, judgment was given in favour of the ringsharper.

PRESENCE OF MIND.

In a solitary house near London, there lived a gentleman and his niece, with a butler and two female Having occasion to go from home, the gentleman gave his niece the key of the strong closet where the family plate was kept, and requested that she would take charge of it herself. A day or two after his departure the butler came and asked the key. saving that he would take the opportunity to clean the silver plate during his master's absence. Something in the man's eye made the lady doubt the honesty of his intentions, and she declined to give him the key, saying that as her uncle had left no orders about the matter, it could stand over till his return. That night, after locking her bed-room door as usual, she was not a little startled to observe the butler crouching down behind an easy chair which stood near the wall. His conduct in the morning instantly flashed across her mind, and she was no longer at a loss to account for his desire to possess himself of the key of the closet. Determined to betray no knowledge of his presence, she sat down at the dressing-table, and taking up her Bible, endeavoured to read it. At length she proceeded to undress, first taking the key of the closet from her pocket and putting it down with some little noise, that the man might know where to find it. After silently imploring the protection and wisdom she so sorely needed, she extinguished the candle and lay down in bed. After a while she heard the chair gently pushed. and through her closed eyelashes, by the faint glimmer of the rush-light she had lit on the hearth, she could see him take up the key and the candlestick. At the same time she perceived some kind of instrument in his hand, but lay perfectly still, as if asleep. He drew

the bed-clothes down from her face and stooped over her, watching her countenance most intently, yet she never made the slightest movement. At length, to her intense relief, he quitted the room, leaving the door partly open. She then heard him unlock the strong closet at the end of the gallery, and begin to move the plate about, as if he was proceeding to pack it up. Believing that he had left the key in the door, she instantly resolved, if possible, to save her uncle's property and secure the thief. Throwing a shawl round her, she stole quietly along the gallery, and finding the key where she expected it, she suddenly closed the door and locked the thief in. In vain did he alternately call, threaten, and promise what he would do if she would only let him out. She immediately roused the womenservants, who were not a little amazed at what had happened. None of them wished for any more sleep that night, but they sat up together and waited for the day. In the morning the thief was removed to prison. When on his trial, he admitted that had he believed it possible for any young lady to behave as his mistress had done, he would certainly have murdered her. But her coolness had completely thrown him off his guard, and when he saw her, as he thought, so soundly asleep, he did not like to injure her, for she had always been kind to him, and he had no personal grudge against her.

SWIFT JUSTICE.

A Russian merchant in the course of his travels through Europe, reached the city of Warsaw. Having a letter of introduction to one of the chief citizens there, he repaired to his house, and was courteously received. He stayed with him for a week, and his host shewed him everything worth seeing in the town. At the end of

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this time the guest expressed a wish to see some of the worst parts of the city. Before going there, he asked his host to take charge of a box containing diamonds and other valuables, the property of a friend, which he had undertaken to convey to a person in another town. The host agreed to the proposal, and they set out on their walk through the slums of the city, without any fear of risk, as the box was securely deposited in a safe. Next morning, when the time for his departure arrived, the merchant thanked his kind entertainers for their hospitality, and added that he would now resume the charge of the box himself. The gentleman and his wife, however, now pretended entire ignorance of the whole affair, and declared that such a box had never been given to them, and even hinted that the merchant's brain was affected, or he would not insist in making such a demand. Hastening from the house in the greatest alarm, the stranger went and stated his case to the police. Here much astonishment was expressed that he should have parted with his valuables without any witness or any written acknowledgment. Being asked if he had no proof that the box belonged to him, he replied: 'None whatever, except the key. The box is locked and I have the key—here it is.' And he produced a small key from his inside pocket. Not knowing well what to do, the official brought the merchant to the Archduke Constantine, the governor of Poland, and told him the circumstances of the case. When the story was concluded, the governor, after a moment's reflection, sent for the treacherous host. On entering the room, he addressed him as follows: 'Sit down at that desk, and write as I dictate to you.' The man sat down and took up a pen, while the governor began dictating: 'My dear wife, all is found out'--- 'No; I won't write that,' said the man, springing from his seat. 'Then you are guilty,' was the prompt answer. Puzzled and foiled, he resumed his seat and wrote as desired: 'My dear wife, all is found out. Send the box by the bearer.' Having signed his name to it, a messenger was despatched with the letter. On reading it, the lady turned pale and trembled violently. She at once handed the box to the messenger, who returned with it to the archduke. It was then handed to the merchant, who opened it, and found the jewels exactly as he had left them. The governor thereupon rang the bell, and to the attendant who entered he said, pointing to the guilty man: 'Off with him to Siberia; he must never again cross the threshold of his own house.'

THE SHEEP-STEALER AND HIS DOG.

In a remote district of the Highlands, a good many years ago, the farmers were much annoyed by their sheep being stolen. Before retiring for the night, they would count over the number in the flock, but, on going out in the morning, one or two of the finest would be missing. If a watch were set, the thief, whoever he was, never appeared on these occasions. If the night watching were discontinued, however, the depredations were renewed with fresh vigour. Suspicion fell upon a man who lived about three miles off, and who carried on business as a sheep-dealer, supplying the butcher in a village at some distance. Besides his cottage, this man had a rude sheep station on an unfrequented part of a neighbouring hill. Nothing, however, could be proved against him. One of the farmers who had suffered most, had made most strenuous though fruitless exertions to find out the thief. At last, one Sunday morning, when he happened to awake very early, he got up and dressed himself, and went out for a stroll as the day was breaking.

He walked in the direction of the sheep-fields, and had just reached a wood, when he saw a man, accompanied by a collie, walking along a path at the foot of the field. He was rather surprised at seeing any one afoot at that early hour, and lay down among some furze to watch what might happen. He noticed the man, whom he recognised as the suspected sheep-stealer, stop various sheep and look at them intently. His dog did the same, and then looked up in his master's face with a knowing expression. The farmer observed that the animals thus singled out were the best in his flock. His suspicions being now thoroughly aroused, he resolved to say nothing to any one about what he had seen, but to return quietly next night and watch. He accordingly did so, and saw the dog come up, select the very sheep pointed out to him the night before, and drive them by an unfrequented path to his master's station. The man was tried and convicted of sheep-stealing. He confessed that he had stolen a great many sheep in this way, and said that his dog would never go out when there was any danger of discovery, and that he could only account for his going out on the night when he was detected, by the extreme quietness which the watcher had preserved. The poor misguided dog, whose sagacity might have been turned to better account, fell a victim to his evil practices, as it was thought dangerous to allow a dog accustomed to such habits to live.

THE COBBLER OF MESSINA.

During the last century there lived in the city of Messina an honest cobbler, who was grieved by the corruption and oppression—the private frauds, the public robberies, and the perversion of justice under which his country laboured. He saw all these evils becoming

daily more rampant, partly from the want of will, and partly from the want of power in the government to chastise offenders. He therefore resolved to endeavour to reform these disorders by becoming the avenger of the innocent and the terror of the wicked. Having provided himself with a short gun, which he carried under his cloak, he sallied out in the evenings and waylaid such of the incorrigible offenders as he chanced to meet. He returned home after having put them to death in the most stealthy manner possible. the dead bodies were found with all their ornaments about them, and often with considerable sums of money in their pockets, it was evident that robbery was not the object of the murderer; and their number made it plain that they did not all fall victims to private revenge. The excitement which arose in the city is indescribable. Things came at last to such a pass, that no rogue of any rank durst walk the streets after dark. Spies and watchmen were employed to detect the murderer or prevent a repetition of his deeds, but all to no purpose. At length, when upwards of fifty of the most notorious villains had fallen by the hand of the secret assassin, a proclamation was issued offering a reward of two thousand crowns to any one who should discover the author of the murders, and a like reward, with an absolute indemnity to the perpetrator himself, if he came forward and confessed his guilt. The cobbler having satisfied his zeal for justice, went directly to the palace and demanded an audience with the vicerov. After confessing his deeds and declaring the motive by which he was actuated, he added: 'You, sir, who in reality are guilty of similar offences, deserved the same fate, and would have met with it too, had I not respected the representative of my prince, who, I know, is accountable to God alone.' The viceroy, convinced that he had told him no more than

the truth, repeated his assurance of safety, and paid him the promised reward. The cobbler thanked the viceroy, and told him that he believed it prudent, after what had passed, to make choice of some other city for his habitation. He was accordingly transported to one of the ports in the territory of Genoa, where he passed the rest of his days in ease and quiet. The city of Messina for many a day experienced the happy effects of his enthusiastic zeal for the public good, and his strict execution of justice without respect of persons.

THE EXILES OF SIBERIA.

Towards the close of the last century, a Russian officer fell under the displeasure of the emperor, and was banished to the wilds of Siberia. His wife, taking Elizabeth, their only child, a little girl four years old, followed her husband into exile. Siberia became Elizabeth's home. and scarcely remembering any other country, the days of her childhood passed happily away. Through time, however, she began to realise the extent of the misfortune which had befallen her unhappy parents; and in her fifteenth year she resolved, if possible, to obtain an interview with the emperor, and entreat him to pardon her offending father. Undaunted by the difficulties of the project, and after pondering on it long and earnestly, she made known to her parents the scheme she had in view. To the exile and his wife, the idea of their daughter traversing the vast extent of country lying between Siberia and St Petersburg alone, seemed quite preposterous. They reasoned with her, and besought her to give up the scheme as utterly hopeless. All their arguments, however, could not convince her, and she pertinaciously adhered to her resolution. She said she felt

certain of success, and at last received her parents' consent. After some delay she obtained a passport; and taking a last farewell of her sorrowing parents, who implored the divine blessing on their child, she took her departure. Over barren plain, through dense forest, and across the ice-bound stream she held her way for months till she trod the streets of the Russian capital, bordered with magnificent palaces and thronged with brilliant equipages. now she began to realise the difficulty of her undertaking. How was she to obtain an audience of the emperor? After many unsuccessful attempts, a noble lady of the court became interested in the young stranger. Through this lady, the story of the Siberian girl was communicated to the empress, who expressed a desire to see the youthful suppliant. Being conducted into the czarina's presence, her reception was most favourable, and her simple story evidently gained the sympathy of the exalted lady. Next day she was introduced to the emperor, who not only granted her father a pardon, but settled upon herself a handsome fortune. The young Siberian at once became the centre of attraction, and her praises were repeated everywhere. Orders were transmitted to Siberia for the immediate release of the exiled officer, and the expense of his journey was defrayed from the public treasury. Elizabeth obtained leave to go and meet her parents, and in the church of Nijni the affecting reunion took place. After this meeting she determined on entering a convent. Nothing could shake her resolution. She had been the means of releasing her father and mother from captivity, and she felt that the great work of her life was accomplished. The fatigue of her protracted journey and the change of climate seriously affected her health. Consumption seized upon her young and fragile frame, and she died, after a lingering illness, in the convent of Novgorod.

A STRANGE QUANDARY.

A Highland shepherd named Duncan, who was employed on a large grazing farm in the north of Scotland, missing a sheep from the flock one day, went in quest of the fugitive. In the course of his rambles he ascended a narrow path, leading to the summit of a lofty precipice. The road was not much more than two feet broad, and so rugged and difficult, that it would have been impracticable to any but the light step and steady brain of the practised mountaineer. The precipice on the right rose like a wall, and on the left sank to a depth which would make one giddy to look down upon. But Duncan passed cheerfully on, now whistling to beguile the time, and now taking careful heed to his footsteps when the difficulties of the path demanded unusual caution. He had not ascended more than half way up the slope when he encountered a large deer coming down the cliff by the same path in an opposite direction. If Duncan had had a gun, no encounter could have given him more pleasure, but in the circumstances the meeting was in the highest degree unwelcome. Neither party had the power of retreating, for the stag had no room to turn himself in the narrow path; and if Duncan had turned his back to go down, he knew enough of the creature's habits to be certain that it would rush upon him while engaged in the difficulties of the retreat. They therefore stood perfectly still for some time, looking at each other in mutual embarrassment. At length the deer began to lower its formidable antlers, as these creatures do when brought to bay, and are preparing to rush upon the huntsman and the hounds. Duncan, seeing the danger of a conflict in which he would in all likelihood be worsted, lay down on the narrow ledge of rock which he occupied. In this position he awaited further procedure on the part of the deer, without making the least motion, lest he might arouse its suspicions. After remaining opposed to each other in this extraordinary manner for three or four hours, the buck seemed to take the resolution of passing over the obstacle that lay in its path, and approached the prostrate shepherd very slowly and cautiously. When the animal came close to the Highlander, it stooped down its head as if to examine him more closely, when the untamable love of sport peculiar to his countrymen overcame Duncan's fears. Forgetful of the dangers of his position, with one hand he seized the deer's horn, while with the other he drew his dirk. At the same instant the buck bounded over the precipice, carrying the shepherd along with it. They were found next morning at the bottom of the cliff, but as the deer had fallen undermost, it was killed on the spot, while Duncan escaped with the fracture of an arm, a leg, and three ribs. The injuries which he received rendered him a cripple for the rest of his life.

THE COTTON-SPINNER'S SECRET.

Sir Robert Peel, father of the late prime-minister of England, made his money by cotton-spinning. At first his business was not extensive, but suddenly he made a tremendous start, and soon distanced all his rivals. He grew immensely rich; but the lucky accident to which he was indebted for his enormous wealth is not generally known. In the early days of cotton-spinning, great trouble was caused by filaments of cotton adhering to the bobbins and accumulating so as to clog the machinery. This rendered frequent stoppages necessary to clean the machines, and caused much loss of time. Every effort was made to find out some plan to prevent this clogging, but in vain, and the evil seemed insurmountable. Of

course the delays caused in cleaning the machines seriously affected the wages of the operatives. noticed, however, that one man always drew his full pay. and his loom never had to stop to be cleaned, although every other in the factory might be idle. It was suspected that he put his bobbins through some secret process. which it was resolved to discover if possible. He was watched, and his fellow-workmen tried to extract the secret from him, but all to no purpose. At last Mr Peel sent for him to have an interview with him. He was a rough Lancashire man, unable to read or write, and entered his employer's presence pulling his forelock and shuffling along the floor with his big clumsy wooden shoes. 'Well, Dick,' said Mr Peel, 'how do you manage to have your bobbins always clean? Have you any objection to let me know?' The workman replied that it was a secret, and that if he told it, others would know as much as he. Mr Peel offered him anything he would ask if he would only communicate the secret. The workman grinned, scratched his head, and shuffled for a few minutes, while his master anxiously waited for his reply, expecting that he would probably ask a hundred pounds or so-a sum which he would most willingly have given. Presently Dick said: 'I'll tell you if you'll give me a quart of beer a day as long as I'm in the mills.' Mr Peel quickly agreed to the terms, saying: 'You shall have it, Dick, and half a gallon every Sunday into the bargain.' Well, then,' said Dick, first looking cautiously around to see that no one was near, and putting his mouth close to Mr Peel's ear, 'this is it: Chalk your bobbins.' This, indeed, was the great secret. Dick had been in the habit of furtively chalking his bobbins, and this simple contrivance had prevented the adhesion of the cotton. As the bobbins used were white, the chalking escaped detection. The sagacious Mr Peel saw the use of the

advice at a glance, and at once patented the invention. 'Chalking' machinery was contrived; and his firm soon took the lead in cotton-spinning. It is but right to add that a handsome pension was settled on Dick, to whose ingenuity the invention was originally due.

A COSTLY EXPERIMENT.

In India there was a race of thieves called Dacoits, who were notorious for their expertness in stealing horses and escaping detection. One of these rascals was caught and brought before the colonel of a cavalry regiment which had frequently suffered from such depredations. Death was the punishment due for his crime; but the officer promised him his liberty and a hundred rupees if he would shew how the robberies were effected in spite of every precaution. The thief almost sneered at the offer of the bribe; but after a moment's pause, he replied: 'I am ready.' The colonel then ordered his officers to attend at the stable tent to watch the trick, that they might be able to guard against it in future. Two cavalry soldiers and two grooms were also in attendance. When all was prepared, a very spirited and valuable horse belonging to the colonel—one that allowed nobody except his master or his groom to approach himwas fixed upon for the experiment. But the robber was all the more pleased at this, as he declared it would better display his dexterity. The horse was tethered, like all cavalry horses in the field in India, beneath an open tent, his legs being each fastened by a rope to a staple in the ground. A groom lay on one side, and a forager on the other. The soldier to whom the steed was supposed to belong was stretched immediately behind him, and another close at hand, with orders

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that if they could in any way detect, by noise or touch. the tread of the robber, they were instantly to start up and seize him. Till then they were to close their eyes and pretend to be asleep. The robber threw himself on the grass, and, like a snake, crawled up to the first guard, and lay quietly beside him for a moment, to ascertain if he were asleep. Gently rising over him, he then crept between the groom and the horse till he actually lay beneath the spirited animal, which, strange to say, never stirred. With the greatest nicety he undid one of the hind tethers and one of the fore. He now paused for a while, but the horse did not move. He then unloosed the other ropes, and creeping out between the fore-legs, managed to substitute a native bridle for the halter. The spectators were lost in admiration, particularly the old colonel, whose praise was unbounded. But still the most difficult part of the task remained to be donenamely, to get the horse away. This was effected by turning him round. The Dacoit now quickly raised himself up by the arms, and the next moment was on the animal's back. Then walking him up to the supposed guard, the horse stepped over his legs, and in the next instant the thief stood clear of all impediments, and striking in his heels, set off down the lines at full gallop. The colonel was pleased beyond measure with the man's expertness, but thought it might be possible to invent some means to thwart the schemes of such clever thieves. Meanwhile, the adroit native had reached the outskirts of the camp, when the colonel, who began to think the thief had shewn enough of his skill, called on him to come back. But none are so deaf as those who will not hear. that moment the worthy commander never saw his favourite charger again; and he was ever afterwards bound to blush when the word Dacoit was mentioned in his presence.

SUMMARY PUNISHMENT.

The Chinese emperor Kang-hi, who was remarkable for his sincere love of his subjects and his strong feeling of justice, never failed to protect the innocent, and punish the crimes of the mandarins. When out hunting one day he left his attendants, and proceeding slowly along the road, saw an old man sitting on the ground weeping bitterly. Alighting from his horse, the emperor went up to the man and asked the cause of his grief. He replied: 'I had a little property in the neighbourhood of the imperial residence. The governor of the palace coveting my estate, seized it, and reduced me to beggary. I had a son too, who might have been the support of my old age, but the governor has taken him and made him a These misfortunes are the cause of my tears.' The youthful emperor addressing the stranger in kindly tones, said: 'Venerable friend, calm your grief. Is the imperial palace far from this?' 'Five miles, master.' 'Very well: we shall go together, and entreat the governor to restore you your property and your son.' 'Ah, sir,' cried the old man with a look of despair, 'the governor is a wicked man. If we go to him he will only insult us.' 'Take courage,' said the emperor; 'I am determined to go, and I hope our visit will lead to good.' The old man consented, but added: 'As I am old, I cannot keep pace with your horse, and shall only delay you on your journey.' 'True,' said Kang-hi; 'but I am young and strong; so you'shall mount my horse, and I will walk.' As the old man, however, would not accept this offer, the monarch took him up behind him. They were proceeding in this manner, when some mandarins of the imperial suite came up. The sovereign addressing them in the Tartar language ordered them to retire. When the pair arrived at the palace, Kang-hi demanded to see the

governor, and when he appeared, the monarch, dropping his hunting dress, displayed the imperial dragon that was embroidered on his breast. Recognising the emperor, the governor fell on his knees; while the trembling old man threw himself at the feet of his protector, who raised him with great affability. Just then the mandarins and the grand dignitaries, who had been following the chase, issued from a valley, and came to range themselves round their royal master. The emperor determined to make this brilliant throng the witnesses of the punishment of the unjust mandarin. After having rebuked him for his crimes, he ordered him to be executed on the spot. He then addressed himself to the old man, saying: 'I now restore to you the son and the estate which were taken from you, and I appoint you governor of this palace; but take care that prosperity effects no change in your feelings and conduct, or another may one day profit by your injustice, as you have now profited by the miscon-duct of him whose headless trunk you now see quivering at my feet.' The new governor's subsequent conduct. which was distinguished by exemplary integrity and kindness, justified his sudden elevation from poverty to wealth and power.

THE SECRET TREASURE.

A poor mason in Granada, who could scarcely earn bread enough for his numerous family, was one night roused from his sleep by a loud knocking at his door. On opening it, he beheld a tall, meagre, cadaverous-looking priest, who said that he wanted him to do a piece of work for him that very night. At the same time he told him that he would be well paid for it, but that he must suffer himself to be blindfolded while being led to the spot where the work was to be done. To this the

workman readily consented, and was then taken by the priest through winding lanes and alleys into the interior of an old dilapidated house. Here the bandage was removed from his eyes, and he found himself in a court dimly lighted by a single lamp. In the centre was the dry basin of an old Moorish fountain, under which the priest requested him to build a small vault-bricks and mortar being at hand for the purpose. He worked all night, but without finishing his task. Just before daybreak the priest put a piece of gold into his hand, and conducted him blindfolded back to his dwelling. The priest called for him again the next night, and after a few hours' work, the vault was completed. He then helped to carry in four large jars, evidently full of money. These were deposited in the vault, which was then built up, the pavement replaced, and all traces of the work obliterated. After being again hoodwinked, the man was led forth to a lonely spot in the outskirts of the city. The priest put two gold pieces into his hand, and told him to wait there till he heard the cathedral bell toll for mating 'If you presume to uncover your eyes before that time. evil will befall you,' said the priest, and then departed. The moment he heard the matin peal the workman removed the bandage from his eyes and returned home. A short time after this the priest died suddenly, and having no relations, it was expected that he would leave all his treasure to the church. When the priests and friars appeared to claim his wealth, they could find nothing but a few ducats in a leathern purse. The house he had occupied was said to be haunted, and no one would live in it. The owner of it, however, happened to employ the poor mason to make some repairs on it. On coming to execute them he remembered having seen the house before, and recognised it as the place where he had built up the jars of money in the vault. He offered

to live in it himself, put it in repair for nothing, and dispel the ghost that was said to haunt it. The land-lord readily consented, and the mason taking possession, soon appropriated the hoard of money which he had helped to conceal. By this means he became one of the richest men in Granada, and gave large sums to the church, by way of satisfying his conscience. He took good care to conceal the secret of his wealth, and revealed it on his deathbed only to his son and heir.

THE MISSING SNUFF-BOX.

. Several gentlemen, among whom was Marshal Wade, were one evening sitting at the gambling-table eagerly engaged in play. As the game went on the marshal pulled out a valuable gold snuff-box richly set with diamonds, took a pinch, and passed it round the company. After four or five throws of the dice, he recollected the circumstance, and not perceiving the snuff-box, he angrily declared that no man should stir till it was produced, and proposed that a general search should be made. Suspicion fell on a person who sat on his right, dressed as an officer, but whose appearance betokened poverty and want. It was proposed to search him first; but he refused to submit to this indignity, declaring, on the honour of a soldier, that he knew nothing of the snuffbox. He added at the same time that he was ready to fight a duel with any of the company who dared to doubt his word. The eyes of all were now turned on the marshal for an answer, when eagerly clapping down his hand for his sword, he felt the missing box in the sidepocket of his breeches, into which he had inadvertently put it after it had been passed round the table. Remorse, mingled with pity for the wounded feelings of his brother-officer, at once seized him. He immediately left the room, saying: 'I ask your pardon, and hope to find it granted by your breakfasting with me to-morrow, and henceforth ranking me amongst your friends.' The invitation was accepted; and after some conversation, the marshal requested the stranger to tell the true reason for his refusing to be searched when the snuff-box went missing. 'Being upon half-pay and friendless,' returned the officer, 'I am obliged to husband every penny of my income. On going to dine at an eating-house yesterday, I found that I had very little appetite; and as I could not eat what I had paid for, nor afford to lose it, I had wrapped up in a piece of paper the leg and wing of a fowl and a small loaf, and put them in my pocket. The thought of the food being found there, if a general search were made, was so abhorrent to me, that I would have preferred to fight every man in the room, rather than have my poverty exposed.' 'Enough,' said the marshal. 'You will dine with me to-morrow; we must prevent your being again placed in such an unpleasant dilemma.' They met next day, when the marshal presented him with a captain's commission, and a purse of sovereigns to procure a new outfit, in view of at once joining the regiment to which he had been appointed.

AN EMPEROR'S PRESCRIPTION.

Joseph II., emperor of Austria, was in the habit of wandering about his dominions under various disguises, that he might become acquainted with the actual condition of his subjects, and come within hearing of complaints which would otherwise never have reached him. On one occasion when he was passing through the streets of Vienna dressed as a private gentleman, he bestowed alms on some mendicants who appealed to him for help. While distributing the money his attention

was arrested by a boy about twelve years old who timidly approached him. On inquiring at the child how he was reduced to the necessity of begging, he learned that his father, an officer in the imperial army, had been obliged through illness to quit the service, and till his death had supported his family on a pension granted him by the emperor, but that now the family were left quite destitute. The poor little fellow went on to say that his mother had been unable to leave her bed for weeks, and that his two brothers watched beside her while he went to beg. On hearing this tale of distress, the emperor despatched the boy for a physician, giving him money to pay the fee and provide what luxuries the patient might require. When the boy departed, the emperor having obtained the address, soon found his way to the dwelling of the unfortunate widow. Entering the apartment, which bore testimony to the extreme poverty and misery of its occupants, His Majesty introduced himself as a physician who had casually heard of her distress, and had come to give what relief lay in his power. Approaching the couch, and making inquiries as to the symptoms of the disease under which she laboured, he wrote a few lines on a paper and left it on the mantel-piece. 'I will leave you this prescription,' said he; 'and on my next visit I hope to find you much relieved.' He then withdrew, and almost immediately thereafter the eldest son entered with a physician. 'O mamma,' cried the boy, 'a kind gentleman gave me all this;' and he put into her hand the money the emperor had given him. 'It will pay the doctor, and buy everything till you are well and strong again.' 'A physician has been here already, my child,' said his mother, 'and has left a prescription on the mantel-piece there.' The boy took down the paper, and read as follows: 'MADAM—Your son met me in the street, and apprised me of the fact that the widow of

one of my bravest officers was suffering from sickness and poverty. I regret that I did not know of your distress sooner, but I shall immediately place your name on the list for a pension of two thousand florins per annum, and hope that you may live many years to enjoy it.' The widow and her children were taken under the patronage of the emperor, and a brilliant career was opened up for the boys, who inherited their father's bravery and their mother's piety.

UNEXPECTED RELIEF.

A Jew once ordered a French merchant in Morocco to supply him with a large quantity of black hats, green shawls, and red silk stockings. The merchant procured the articles as ordered; but when they were ready for delivery, the Jew refused to take them. As in Morocco the emperor himself administers justice, the case was brought before him for decision. When examined, how-ever, the Jew denied ever having given the order at all, and declared that he did not even know the French merchant. 'Have you any witnesses?' said His Majesty to the Frenchman. 'No,' replied the latter. 'Well, so much the worse for you,' said the emperor; 'in a transaction of this kind you should have settled the bargain in presence of witnesses. You may retire.' The poor merchant went home in despair, for he knew not where to find a market for the goods which he had been at the trouble to procure, and for which he would require to pay a large sum to the manufacturer. The emperor, however, thought that he was an honest man, and that the Jew had really ordered the goods. To prevent the poor merchant from suffering such a heavy loss, he soon fell upon a plan by which they were all bought up in a very short time. The emperor having despotic power, could

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order all his subjects to obey his commands, although to us these might seem very unreasonable. He accordingly caused the following proclamation to be made in all the public places of the city: 'Every Jew who within fortyeight hours after this proclamation shall be found in the streets without a black beaver on his head, a green shawl round his neck, and red silk stockings on his feet, shall be immediately apprehended and conveyed to the court of our palace, to be there flogged to death.' Knowing that the emperor was a man who would not hesitate to carry out the threat contained in the proclamation, the Jews flocked to the shop of the French merchant, and before evening the whole of the articles which the deceitful Israelite had ordered were purchased at the most exorbitant prices. Instead of losing by the transaction, as he expected, the merchant was thus, by the help of the emperor's proclamation, able to clear a far larger profit than if he had disposed of them to the Jew at the price agreed upon.

THE BELLS OF LIMERICK.

The old bells that hung in the tower of Limerick Cathedral were made by a young Italian, after many years of patient toil. He was proud of his work, and when they were purchased by the prior of a neighbouring convent near Lake Como, the artist invested the profits of the sale in a pretty villa on the margin of the lake, where he could hear their music wafted from the convent cliffs across the water at morning, noon, and night. Here he intended to pass his life; but this happiness was denied him. In one of those feudal broils which were once so common in Italy, he suffered the loss of his all; and when the storm passed, he found himself without home, family, friends, and fortune. The convent had

been razed to the ground, and the tuneful chimes whose music had charmed his listening ear for so many happy days of his past life, had been carried away to a foreign land. He became a wanderer. His hair grew white and his heart withered before he again found a resting-place. In all these years of bitter desolation the memory of the music of his bells never left him; he heard it in the forest and in the crowded city, on the sea, and by the banks of the quiet stream in the basin of the hills. He heard it by day, and when night came and troubled sleep, it whispered to him soothingly of peace and happiness. One day he met a mariner from over the sea who told him a story of a wondrous chime of bells he had heard in Ireland. The artist had a presentiment that they were his bells. He journeyed and voyaged thither, sick and weary, and sailed up the Shannon. The ship came to anchor in the port near Limerick, and he took passage in a small boat for the purpose of reaching the city. Before him the tall steeple of St Mary's lifted its turreted head above the mist and smoke of the old town. He leaned back wearily, yet with a happy light beaming from his eyes, and prayed: 'O let them sound me a loving welcome, just one note of greeting, and my pilgrimage is done!' It was a beautiful evening. The air was like that of his own Italy in the sweetest time of the year, the death of the spring. The bosom of the river was like a broad mirror, reflecting in its clear depths the towers and the streets of the old town, and 'the patines of bright gold' that flecked the blue sky. The lights of the city danced upon the wavelets that rippled from the boat as she glided along. Suddenly the stillness was broken. From St Mary's tower there came a shower of silver sound, filling the air with music. The boatmen rested on their oars to listen. The old Italian crossed his arms and fixed his streaming eyes upon t'

tower. The sound of his bells bore to his heart all the sweet memories of the buried past. At last he was happy—too happy to speak, too happy to breathe. When the rowers sought to arouse him, his face was upturned to the tower, but his eyes were closed. The poor stranger had breathed his last. The master-pieces of his own handicraft had rung his 'passing-bell.'

THE KING AND THE MILLER.

In the reign of Frederick the Great, king of Prussia, there was a mill near Potsdam which obstructed the view from the windows of the palace of Sans Souci. Annoved by this drawback to his favourite residence. the king sent to the owner of the mill inquiring the price for which he would sell it. 'For no price,' was the reply of the sturdy Prussian; and in a moment of anger the monarch gave orders that the mill should be pulled down. 'The king may do this,' said the miller, quietly folding his arms: 'but there are laws in Prussia, and he will find that out.' Forthwith he commenced a lawsuit against the monarch, the issue of which was, that the court gave a decision against His Majesty, compelling him to rebuild the mill, and in addition to pay a large sum of money as compensation for the injury he had The king felt mortified at being worsted by one of his subjects, but had the magnanimity to say, addressing his courtiers: 'I am glad to find that there are just laws and upright judges in my kingdom who are bold enough to decide against me when they think I am in the wrong.' Many years afterwards, a descendant of the honest miller, who had in due course of time succeeded to the hereditary possession of the property, found himself involved in pecuniary difficulties that had become insurmountable. In his distress, he wrote to the then king of Prussia, reminding him of the refusal experienced by Frederick the Great at the hands of his ancestor the miller, and stating that if His Majesty now wished to obtain possession of the property, he would, in his present embarrassed circumstances, most willingly dispose of the mill. The king immediately wrote, with his own hand, the following reply: 'MY DEAR NEIGHBOUR-I cannot allow you to sell the mill. It must remain in the possession of your family as long as one of your descendants survives, for the building belongs to the history of Prussia, and is a standing memorial of the integrity of our judges and the impartiality of our laws. I am sorry, however, to hear that you are in straitened circumstances, and therefore send you six thousand dollars to pay off your debts, and hope the sum will be sufficient for the purpose. Consider me always your affectionate neighbour-Frederick William.' The mill still stands, and is occupied by the descendants of the resolute miller who had the fortitude to thwart the despotic monarch in his desire to improve the prospect from the windows of his palace.

THE THREE RINGS.

An Eastern nobleman had an opal ring of priceless value which had the power of making its wearer beloved by his fellow-men. At his death he bequeathed it to his best-loved son on condition that he should in turn leave it to his favourite son, and so on through all succeeding generations. Moreover, the possessor of the ring was to be considered the head of the family, regardless of the claims of birthright. After being handed down through several generations, the ring at last became the property of a father who had three sons, all equally obedient and amiable, so that he could not

decide to which of them it should be bequeathed. At last a new idea struck him, and he secretly gave orders to a jeweller to make two rings after the pattern of the magic ring. The jeweller was so successful in his task that the nobleman was unable to tell the original ring from those that had been made like it. Being on his deathbed he summoned his eldest son into his presence, took a tender farewell of him, bestowing upon him his blessing and one of the rings, which the son supposed to be the true and only one. He next sent for his second son and spoke to him in the same way, giving a ring to him also. After doing the same with the third son, his illness increased, and soon afterwards he expired. His sons buried him with great pomp; and after the funeral the eldest son addressed his brothers and friends who were assembled, claiming to be the head and ruler of the family, as the possessor of the magic ring. Great was the astonishment of the other brothers on hearing this declaration, but their amazement was doubled when each shewed his own ring and told of his father's farewell words. Each of the two younger sons felt that he had as good a claim to superiority as his eldest brother. An eager discussion followed, but it was found impossible on the closest examination to distinguish the magic ring from the jeweller's imitations, and the brothers resolved to bring the matter before the judge. In the court of justice each declared how his father had given him the ring, and had privately promised to give it to him alone. Not one of them was willing to believe that the father had deceived him in the matter; but each was more inclined to suspect his brothers of bringing forward a false claim supported by a spurious ring. But even this they were very unwilling to believe, as they had always lived in mutual love and confidence. The judge was much perplexed,

but at last gave judgment as follows: 'I cannot decide which is the true ring, and who is the true head of the family. If the true ring possesses the magic power of making its owner beloved, the false ones cannot possess the same virtue. Return to your home and cease your strife. Let each believe his own ring the true one, and to prove the truth of his claim, let each strive to make himself the most beloved. He who excels in this will assuredly shew himself to be the possessor of the real magic ring.' They followed the wise counsels of the judge, and vied with each other in shewing an amiable unselfish temper until the dispute about the rings was forgotten. They passed their lives in harmony and happiness; and in this way the deceit of their father had a better issue than it deserved.

A PARROT'S CONSOLATION.

A parrot was the property of a gentleman who was very fond of pickled cockles. One day he sent in a small quantity to be prepared by the cook, telling her at the same time to be very careful of them, as they were difficult to be got at that season. Having pickled them, the cook put them into a jar, which was left uncovered till the cockles should cool. The parrot's cage, which had been brought down to be cleaned, stood near the jar; and the moment the cook left the kitchen Poll marched out and helped herself liberally to the cockles, scattering them about on the floor and the bottom of her cage. On her return, the cook perceived the mischief that had been done, and was not long in fastening upon the parrot as its author. In her rage she seized a saucepan of boiling water, and flinging part of its contents on poor Polly, cried out: 'Ah! you've been at the pickled cockles, have you?' The poor bird's

head was so much scalded that all the feathers dropped off, and for a long time she seemed very dejected, sitting silently with her head hanging down and uttering low murmuring sounds. Her cage was placed in the drawing-room, and her mistress tried every means to rouse Polly to her former lively condition, but quite failed in doing so until one day a visitor was announced, and an old gentleman whose head was perfectly bald was ushered in. The moment the stranger entered the room Poll sprang into the ring suspended in her cage, swung herself violently to and fro, and exclaimed in a most vivacious tone: 'Ha! you've been at the pickled cockles, have you?' From that time she quite recovered her spirits; the discovery of one whom she seemed to regard as a fellow-sufferer having apparently reconciled her to her own denuded condition.

A DUMB INTERCESSOR.

A sagacious war-elephant, in the absence of his keeper, was one day amusing himself with his chain in an open part of the town of Pondicherry in India. A man who had committed a theft was just then being pursued by a crowd of people who were determined to seize him. The thief finding his pursuers close upon his heels, and despairing of all other means of safety, ran for protection under the elephant. The animal appeared to be delighted with the poor wretch's confidence, and instantly facing about, charged the advancing crowd with trunk erect, and threw his chain in the air, as is the manner of these animals when engaged in battle with the enemy. The creature became so furious in defence of the criminal, that notwithstanding all the gentle arts made use of by the surrounding multitude, no one could get him to part with the thief. His driver, to whom he was fondly

attached, was then sent for; but even he could not manage him, and every attempt to separate the elephant and his confiding protégé was unavailing. The struggle had lasted some time, when the governor of the town, hearing of the elephant's strange affection for the criminal, came to the spot. Being pleased with the perseverance of the generous quadruped, he yielded to its interposition and pardoned the malefactor. The poor man, in an ecstasy of gratitude, kissed and embraced the proboscis of his dumb benefactor, who now laid aside all his former violence and became tame and gentle in an instant. His keeper then led him away to his stable without the slightest resistance. The pardoned criminal begged hard to be allowed to attend his new acquaintance. This was granted; and in a short time he became his mahout or keeper, an office which he held till the day of his death.

THE VALUE OF KNOWLEDGE

A vizier, or eastern prime-minister, having fallen under the displeasure of his royal master, was sentenced to perpetual captivity in the highest room of a lofty tower. Although grieved at the loss of his master's favour and the prospect of separation from his wife and friends, he did not abandon himself to despair, but set his wits a-working to contrive some means of escape. At last he hit upon a plan which his knowledge of the habits of insects enabled him to carry out. One night his wife came to weep below his window. 'Cease your grief,' said the vizier to her, 'and go home, and return hither when you have procured the following things: a live black beetle, a little rancid butter, a clew of fine silk, a clew of packthread, a clew of whip-cord, and finally a coil of rope.' His wife went home to procure

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the articles as directed; and on the following night she brought them with her to the foot of the tower. vizier told her to touch the head of the beetle with the butter, to tie one end of the silk thread around the insect, and then to place him on the wall of the tower with his head upwards. She did so. Now it is the habit of the beetle to move in the direction of any strong scent or smell above him. Accordingly the beetle, drawn by the smell of the butter on his head, continued to ascend the tower till he reached the vizier's window, and thus put him in possession of one end of the silk thread. Having got hold of the silk thread, the prisoner directed his wife to fasten the packthread to the other end of it. He then drew up the packthread, and by means of it the whip-cord. By means of the whip-cord, he then drew up the stout rope, which he fastened to the gratings of the window. At length, by help of the rope, he descended from the window to the ground, and made his escape. He was thus indebted for his freedom and his life to the knowledge he had acquired of the habits of a little beetle.

A COURAGEOUS HOUSEKEEPER.

A gentleman who lived at the beginning of the present century among the lonely hills on the borders of Derbyshire and Yorkshire, had once occasion to leave home. The household consisted of himself, a man-servant, a young girl, and the housekeeper. On taking his departure, he strictly enjoined his valet on no account to absent himself from the house at night until his return. The man promised to do so, and the gentleman set out on his journey. Notwithstanding the earnest entreaties and remonstrances of the housekeeper, the man went out the first night, and as he did not come in again, the two women retired to rest at the usual time. During the

night they were aroused by a loud knocking at the door. The housekeeper got up, went down-stairs, and inquired who was there, and what was wanted. She was told that a friend of her master's had lost his way, and wanted shelter for the night, as it was wet and stormy. She forthwith gave him admittance, stirred up the fire, led his horse to the stable, and then returned to provide something for her guest to eat. Having taken a hearty meal, he was shewn to his bedroom for the night. On returning to the kitchen, she lifted his greatcoat to hang it before the fire to dry. Feeling it rather heavy, curiosity prompted her to examine the pockets, in which she found a brace of loaded pistols and a large carvingknife. She was astonished at this discovery, and at once inferred what sort of a guest she had to deal with, and what were his probable intentions. However, summoning up all her courage, she proceeded softly up-stairs, and with a rope fastened the door of the room in which the villain slept. She then retired to her own room, and in great perturbation of mind awaited the issue of events. Shortly after a man came to the window, and in a low but distinct tone of voice, said: 'Are you ready?' Grasping one of the pistols, she presented it to his face and fired. The report alarmed the fellow above, who began immediately to try to force open the door of his room. The spirited housekeeper soon stopped him in his attempt by saying: 'You villain, if you open the door you are a dead man.' She then sent the servant-girl for assistance, while she remained with the other pistol in her hand, guarding the chamber-door. When help arrived, the villain was taken into custody; and on searching outside the window, they found the servant-man shot dead. The would-be robber met with his deserts; and the housekeeper, who had acted with so much fidelity and intrepidity, was soon after married to her master.

TOO CLOSE IMITATION.

On one occasion, while on a journey through Italy. the Pope halted at a small village, the inhabitants of which resolved to send some of their principal men as a deputation to His Holiness. The mayor, who was to head the deputation, proposed to present him with some of the chief produce of the country, consisting of pineapples, figs, and cream. It was accordingly arranged that each member should carry some figs and cream in silver basins, the pine-apples, however, being dispensed with. Before setting out, the mayor thus addressed his followers: 'As you do not very well know how to conduct yourselves before exalted personages, you must watch me closely, and do as you see me do.' The procession was formed, with the mayor stalking majestically in front, furnished, like his followers, with a basin of figs in his left hand, and another filled with cream in his right. The door of the room in which His Holiness sat was opened, and the mayor repeated his caution to those behind him: 'Do what you see me do, rememberneither more nor less.' It so happened that there was a step down into the room, but the mayor failed to notice it. He stumbled, and the shock sent his beard and face into the cream-basin. Trying to recover himself, he only made matters worse, for he fell upon his knees with his hands and basin under him, and his creamed face imploringly raised to the representative of St Peter. The other members of the deputation, thinking that this was the proper ceremony to observe in the presence of such a distinguished personage, dipped their beards in the cream, threw away their vessels, and bent down on their knees, at the same time casting a half-inquiring and confident look at their leader; as if they meant to say: 'You see we are all right; we have carefully followed your example.' The Pope was at first astounded, but soon burst into a fit of the most boisterous laughter; while his attendants, thinking that the deputation had come to mock their master, began pelting them with the scattered figs. The mayor hobbled out of the room, closely followed by his brethren, one of whom whispered to him: 'How lucky it is for us that we did not bring the pine-apples! How nicely our heads would have been battered with them!'

A PERILOUS POSITION.

Among the many dangers attending the shooting of wild-fowl, not the least is the chance of the hunter being overtaken by the rapidly advancing tide and drowned. An adventure of this description once befell a duckshooter in Hampshire. Mounted on his mud pattens (flat square pieces of board fastened to the feet), he was traversing one of those vast muddy flats, covered with green sea-weed, which are the favourite feeding-places of the wild-fowl. While intent on watching the game, he was suddenly overtaken by the rising tide. Aware of his danger, he gazed anxiously around, but perceived that his retreat was already cut off. He did not lose his presence of mind, however, but looked about to discover if any part of the waste of mud were higher than the rest. Observing a spot still a foot or two above water. he hastened towards it, and planting himself there, struck the barrel of his gun deep into the ooze, that it might serve him as a buttress against the buffeting of the waves, and as an anchor to which he might cling to prevent himself from being carried away by the current of the flowing or ebbing tide. Being well acquainted with the usual rise of the tide, he calculated that it would not reach above his middle, and that, if he co-

endure the cold of six hours' immersion, he might be saved. Unfortunately, the direction of the wind caused the waters to rise more quickly than usual, and also increased their depth. After patiently watching the gradual advance of the waters till they reached his waist. he was horrified to find that instead of receding as he expected, they crept upwards until his shoulders were covered. At length the spray burst over his head, and the next moment or two would decide his fate. He still firmly grasped his gun-barrel, though he gave himself up for lost. The mainland was too remote to admit of his shouts being heard, and it was vain to hope that any eye, however sharp, could discern so small a speck on the waves as the head of a human being. At this critical moment, he thought he saw the uppermost button of his waistcoat beginning to appear. For a few seconds he remained in suspense; but ere long hope increased to certainty as button after button rose slowly into sight and he became assured that the tide had turned. Though numbed with cold, and nearly fainting, the revival of hope acted like a cordial on his spirits, and enabled him to endure the remaining tedious hours of his imprisonment. At length he reached the land with difficulty, and in a short time recovered from the effects of his prolonged immersion.

EQUINE INSTINCT.

In a recent trial in one of the Western States of America there occurred a curious instance of circumstantial evidence. A young planter but recently married had set out on a distant journey, leaving his young wife behind him. He was mounted on a thoroughbred mare of remarkable intelligence and spirit. In his saddle-bags he carried one or two articles of jewellery, which he was taking to be

repaired in one of the towns on his route, and which afterwards became of great importance in connection with the trial. In the course of his journey he was waylaid and murdered by an assassin, who was afterwards detected with the mare and the valuable articles in his posses-He stoutly declared that he had bought them, and denied all knowledge of the horrid crime. So far there was no evidence to identify him with the murderer, or even to prove the fact of homicide. He was arrested. however, on the charge of having stolen goods in his possession, and was conveyed to the county court under the care of a posse of policemen, with whom, mounted on the stolen mare, rode the brother of the deceased. They had gone some distance on the road, when the mare began to shew signs of great fear. Her nostrils were distended, her eyes glared with excitement, and her tremor became so great that after a few steps she refused to proceed. The suspicions of the company, roused by such unwonted behaviour on the part of the animal, were increased by the demeanour of the prisoner himself, who then, for the first time, lost his self-possession, and could with difficulty keep his seat on his horse. At last the whole party dismounted; and the mare was taken gently by the bridle, so that if they were approaching the fatal spot, the guide that had at first given token of it might now point out its exact position. Gradually, by leading the animal round a continually narrowing circle within which she refused to enter, the spot sought for was brought nearer and nearer. At length the removal of a few boughs that had been cast on the ground shewed where the deathstruggle had taken place, for the earth was still red with blood; and a few feet from the spot was found buried the body of the murdered man himself. Other proofs of the prisoner's guilt were found, by the force of which a conviction was obtained, and the assassin suffered the extreme penalty of the law. But for this singular display of instinct and sagacity on the part of a dumb animal, the murderer might have remained unpunished, and this atrocious crime against society unaverged.

THE BISHOP AND THE BIRDS.

A worthy bishop who lately died at Ratisbon had for his coat of arms two fieldfares with the motto, 'Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?' The device had often excited attention, and many a one had wished to know its origin, as it was generally believed that the bishop had chosen it for himself, and that it had some connection with the events of his early life. When questioned on the point by an intimate friend, the bishop replied by relating the following story: Sixty years ago a little boy resided in a village on the banks of the Danube. His parents were very poor, and almost as soon as he could walk he was sent to gather fuel in the woods. When a little older, he was taught to pick juniper-berries and carry them to a neighbouring distiller who wanted them to make gin. As he passed the open windows of the village school and saw the boys about the same age as himself busy with their lessons, he looked at them with envy, and longed to be among them. But his parents were too poor to bear the expense of his education; and he often wished to find some plan by which he might be enabled to attend school. He happened to learn that the schoolmaster was very fond of fieldfares, and remembering that he had seen large numbers of these birds in the juniper wood, he resolved to catch some and present them to him. Next day he caught two, put them in a basket, and tying an old handkerchief over it, he hastened to he schoolhouse. He asked the master to accept the

birds; but noticing the boy's ragged clothes and ill-fed appearance, the former wished to pay him for them, and asked his price. On again refusing to take money, the master asked him: 'Is there anything I can do for you then in return?' 'O yes!' said the boy, trembling with delight; 'you can do for me what I should like better than anything else. Teach me to read.' The schoolmaster complied. The boy came to get-lessons in his leisure hours, and learned so rapidly that his teacher recommended him to a nobleman who resided in the neighbourhood. This gentleman was so pleased with the boy's intelligence and eagerness to learn that he sent him to prosecute his studies at Ratisbon. The boy profited by his opportunities, and rising to wealth and honour, he adopted two fieldfares as his coat of arms.' 'What do you mean?' asked the bishop's friend. 'I mean.' returned the bishop with a smile, 'that that poor boy was myself.'

DAMON AND PYTHIAS.

Damon, an inhabitant of Syracuse, was unjustly condemned to death by Dionysius, king of Sicily. He begged permission to return to his home to arrange the affairs of his family and bid them a last farewell. This request was granted on condition that he should get some one to take his place till his return; and if he failed to appear before the day of execution, the life of his substitute was to be forfeited. Pythias, one of Damon's fastest friends, instantly offered himself as security, and Damon was set at liberty. Having settled his affairs, he set out to return; but unexpected impediments detained him. Meanwhile Pythias never doubted the fidelity of his friend, but rather rejoiced in the prospect of dying in the room of one so amiable and magnanimous. The fatal day arrived. Pythias was brought forth, and walked with

a serious but satisfied air amidst the guards to the place of execution. Dionysius was already there, exalted on a moving throne drawn by six horses. Pythias vaulted lightly on the scaffold, and turning to the spectators with a placid countenance, thus addressed them: 'My prayers are heard. The gods have detained Damon by contrary winds. He cannot be here till to-morrow, and the blood which is shed to-day will have ransomed my friend. could die happy if I could erase from your minds every mean suspicion, every doubt of the honour of him for whom I am about to suffer. I am confident that he is now on his way hither, hurrying on with all speed, accusing himself and the adverse elements. But I am eager to sacrifice myself for the noblest man I ever met. Executioner, perform your task!' As he uttered these words, a faint clamour rose among the remotest of the crowd; and a distant voice was heard crying: 'Stop the executioner!' and the words were soon caught up by the whole assembly. Damon on a foaming steed now rode up at full gallop, the throng giving way at his approach; and in an instant he was on the scaffold, clasping Pythias in his arms. He expressed his sorrow for imperilling his friend's life, and told how he now rejoiced at being delivered from the anguish of having endangered a life dearer than his own. Pythias, however, still wished to be allowed to die for Damon, and declared that, not to be wholly disappointed, if he could not die for him he would not survive him. Dionysius the king beheld this striking display of disinterested affection with astonishment. His heart was moved, he could not refrain from tears, and leaving his throne, and ascending the scaffold, he cried: 'Live, incomparable pair! Ye have borne testimony to the existence of virtue. Live happily and with renown; and may ye teach me and others to be imitators of your self-denial and undying friendship.'

A · MARVELLOUS ESCAPE'

The following singular incident is related by the captain of a merchantman who witnessed its occurrence. His vessel was anchored off the mouth of the Congo. and the crew, suffering from the excessive heat, felt a strong inclination to dispel their languor by bathing in the waters of the river in the cool of the evening. They were deterred from indulging in this luxury by the presence of the large sharks which they had observed in the progress of their voyage. One sailor, however, who had been drinking to excess, was determined to venture, and regardless of the remonstrances of his comrades, he dashed into the water and struck out for the shore. He had not gone far when those on board observed an alligator making towards him behind a rock that stood a short distance from the land. His escape was now considered impossible, and the mate instantly seized a loaded carabine to shoot the poor fellow ere he fell into the jaws of the monster. The captain, however, would not consent to this, but ordered a boat to be lowered, and fired two shots at the approaching alligator, but without effect, for the bullets glided over his scaly covering like hailstones falling on a tiled roof. The report of the gun and the shouts of the blacks from the sloop soon made the fool-hardy sailor aware of his danger. Looking round and seeing the alligator rushing towards him, he made for the shore with all his might. On approaching within a short distance of some canes and shrubs growing on the bank, a ferocious tiger sprang towards him just at the moment when the jaws of his first enemy were extended to devour him. Now, however, help appeared from a quarter quite unthought of, for the tiger, too eager to secure his prey, leaped over the sailor and fell into the gripe of the alligator. A terrible conflict ensued. The water was reddened by the blood of the tiger, whose efforts to tear the scaly armour of the alligator were of no avail; while the latter had also the advantage of keeping his adversary under water. The alligator soon gained the victory, and despatched his formidable antagonist. They both sank to the bottom and were seen no more. The sailor was rescued and immediately conveyed on board. He uttered not a word while in the boat, though completely sobered by the excitement of his recent adventure; but the moment he reached the deck of the ship, he fell on his knees and returned thanks to the kind Providence which had vouchsafed him so singular a deliverance. Ever afterwards a marked improvement was observable in his conversation and conduct.

A FALSE ALARM.

Two travellers riding on horseback through the south of Italy lost their way, and being overtaken by the darkness, their only plan was to seek for some habitation where they might rest for the night, in the hope that with the help of a guide they might resume their journey in the morning. After wandering about for some time, they reached a house which they entered, not without some misgivings, for it had a gloomy suspicious look about it. Here they found seated at table a family of charcoal-burners, who invited them to share their repast. Being hungry after their long ride, they readily accepted the invitation; but on looking round the room they were surprised to see pistols, sabres, cutlasses, and guns hung all round the walls. The younger of the two travellers entered very freely into conversation with his hosts, telling them whence they came, where they were going, and who they were. He also promised them ample payment

for their kindness on the morrow. He exhibited great anxiety about his valise, and put it on his bed to serve as a pillow, saying that he would have no other. The strangers were then shewn up a ladder into an attic, which was used as a store-room for provisions. This was to be their sleeping-place; and the younger traveller lay down and was soon asleep, his head resting on his pre-cious valise, which, however, contained nothing more valuable than his sweetheart's love-letters. The other, not altogether liking the look of things, resolved to sit up all night and watch; so, making a good fire, he sat down beside it. Just before dawn he heard the husband and wife talking together; and putting his ear to the chimney, which communicated with the room below, he distinctly heard the husband say: 'Must we kill both of them?' To which the wife replied: 'Yes.' After this there was silence for a time. The traveller's blood rap cold to think of the fate that seemed to await himself and his companion, and how little chance there was of escape. In about a quarter of an hour he heard some one ascending the ladder, and through the chinks of the door he saw the husband, closely followed by his wife, the former having a shaded lantern in one hand and a large knife in the other. The traveller hid himself behind the door, which was opened by the man, who, handing the lantern to his wife, crept in on his bare feet. Following behind him, she whispered: 'Gently; go gently!' Approaching the bed on which the younger traveller lay extended with throat exposed, with one hand the intruder seized his knife, and with the other took hold of a ham which hung from the roof, cut a piece off, and withdrew as quietly as he came. The door closed behind him, the light disappeared, and the trembling traveller was left alone with his reflections. Next morning, on coming down to the room below, they found a very nice breakfast prepared for

them. Two fowls were on the table, one of which the guests had to eat, and the other the hostess insisted on their taking with them. When the suspicious traveller saw the two fowls, he understood to what the dreadful words referred: 'Must we kill both of them?'

PURSUED BY TIGERS.

During a terrible storm in South America, a small party of travellers entered a cave for shelter. The storm raged with such violence that they could not hear each other speak amid the deafening roar of the mountain torrents and the crash of falling trees. Suddenly a growling noise issuing from the end of the cave startled the belated travellers, who soon found, to their consternation and horror, that they had unwittingly taken refuge in a tiger's den, and that the growling proceeded from two cubs. At this moment the Indians who acted as guides to the party gave the alarm that a tiger was approaching. The Indians climbed a tree, to be beyond the reach of danger, while the travellers blocked up the mouth of the cave with a large stone which they fortunately found lying near at hand. They immediately heard the roar of the advancing tiger, which was replied to by the growling of the two cubs within, and soon the glaring eyes of the infuriated animal were seen over the top of the stone. He attempted to remove it, but his strength was unequal to the task, and in his disappointment he roared more loudly than before. Several of the imprisoned party levelled their firearms at the tiger's head; but their powder had been damped by the rain, and the pieces missed fire. The Indians then discharged several arrows at the tiger; but they failed to pierce his thick skin. By-and-by the storm ceased; but the tiger

laid himself down at the mouth of the cave. In a short time a roar was heard in the distance, to which the tiger answered, and sprang up directly to his feet. Indians in the tree uttered a shriek of terror as a tigress bounded towards the cave. After staring wildly at the stone which blocked the entrance to her den. she sprang against it with all her force, and would probably have displaced it, had not the party joined together to hold it firm. Suddenly both the tigers turned in the direction of the forest and disappeared. The Indians descended the tree, and urged the travellers to escape at once, as the tigers had ascended the heights in the direction of another entrance to the cave. No time was to be lost, and embracing the opportunity, they hurried through the forest till they reached a wide chasm through which there flowed a mountain torrent. A bridge of reeds had been thrown across, over which they passed, but the tigers were in close pursuit. The last of the party who crossed the bridge cut the fastenings which bound it to the rock, hoping thereby to secure themselves against further danger. The tigress, nevertheless, rushing towards the chasm, made a spring, but coming short, fell down on the rocks below, and thence into the boiling surge. The tiger, without halting for a moment, gave a tremendous leap, and reached the opposite side with his fore-paws. As he clung to the rock, one of the party plunged his spear into the breast of the furious beast, while another struck him on the head with the butt-end of his gun. The tiger was forced to let go his hold, and fell back into the abyss below; but the man whose blows fell so fiercely on the tiger's head overbalanced himself, and was precipitated into the yawning gulf. The rest of the party raised a wild cry of horror as he fell; and their joy for their own escape was swallowed up in their grief for the loss of their ill-fated companion

THE NEGRO AND THE SHARK.

Several years ago a terrible shark frequented a bay in the island of St Vincent in the West Indies. It made sad havoc among the negroes who were accustomed to bathe in the bay, as well as among the crews of the vessels at anchor there, who, ignorant of the monster's presence, ventured to swim in deep water. This formidable creature usually lay behind a large rock, whence he darted forth with amazing rapidity whenever a swimmer appeared in the water. So dreadful was the devastation made by the shark, that the governor of St Vincent offered a reward to any one who should destroy him; and if this were done by a slave, he was to obtain freedom for himself and his family. Swimming in that part of the bay where the shark was most frequently seen was also prohibited. Notwithstanding this, the son of a gentleman who lived near the bay determined to enter the water. In spite of the remonstrances of his elder brother, the lad pulled off his clothes and leaped into the water. After swimming a considerable distance, he suddenly turned round and made for the shore. His brother, who had been watching him, seeing with horror that the shark had darted from his hiding-place in pursuit of his prey, gave a loud shriek. Mungo, a faithful black servant, the moment he perceived the danger of his young master, sprang forward to his rescue, and reached the bay before he was injured. The shark, however, opened his ravenous jaws, turned upon his back, and bit the boy's arm off just above the elbow. Mungo swam forward with the wounded boy, and had almost reached the shore, when the shark again rushed after his prey, and seizing Mungo by the leg, severed it from the body at one bite, to the intense horror of the spectators who had assembled on

the beach. Assistance was given, and the poor negro and his young master were rescued from the shark. When the youth recovered, his father did not fail to reason with him on the serious consequences of disobedience, and told him he might have had to answer for the life of the poor slave, who, even as it was, would remain a cripple for life. The loss of his own arm was a sad calamity. Poor Mungo at last got well, and stumped about on a wooden leg. The shark still continued his devastations in the bay; but Mungo determined to make him pay for the injuries he had done to his young master and himself. Having got his plan matured, the news of Mungo's intended attack on the shark soon spread, and a large crowd assembled to witness his operations. Mungo made his appearance with a large coil of ropes and a cutlass; while a friend of his rolled a cask toward the bay. The cask was stuck all over the inside with nails and iron hooks beited with large pieces of pork, to tempt the shark to put in his head. The cask was made fast to a boat, into which Mungo stepped, saying he was going to give 'Massa Blue Peter' (as the shark was called) a bit of breakfast. After rowing some time round the rock, the shark at length rushed forward and thrust his head into the cask. Mungo seized his cutlass and attacked the shark, which, in attempting to get out of the cask, was caught by the hooks. Mungo lost not a moment, but cut away at Blue Peter, and at last killed him. Taking up the oars he then rowed to the shore amidst the acclamations of the multitude. Many white men took Mungo by the hand and called him a brave fellow. grinning with delight at the success of his enterprise, and the loss of his leg was almost forgotten in the pleasure he derived from the feat he had performed. That day was a day of rejoicing; for not only was Mungo

made free, but a general holiday was given to the slaves to commemorate the death of their rapacious enemy.

THE MURDERER AND HIS DUMB ACCUSER.

The following singular instance of canine attachment and revenge occurred in France in the reign of Charles V. A gentleman named Macaire, an officer in the king's body-guard, cherished a bitter hatred against one of his comrades in service named Aubrey. The two having met in a forest near Paris, Macaire took the opportunity of treacherously murdering his brother-officer, and buried him in a ditch. Aubrey was accompanied at the time by a greyhound, with which he had gone out to hunt. It is not known whether the dog was muzzled, or from what other cause it permitted the deed to be accomplished without its interference. Be this as it may, the hound lay down on the grave of its master, and there remained till hunger compelled it to rise. It then went to the kitchen of one of Aubrey's dearest friends, where it was welcomed warmly and fed. As soon as its hunger was appeared the dog disappeared. For several days this coming and going were repeated, till curiosity was excited. It was resolved to follow the animal, and see if anything could be learned in explanation of Aubrey's sudden disappearance. The dog was accordingly followed, and was seen to come to a pause on some newly turned-up earth, where it uttered the most mournful wailings and howlings. On digging into the ground at the spot, the body of Aubrey was discovered. It was exhumed, and conveyed to Paris, where it was soon afterwards interred in one of the city cemeteries. The dog attached itself henceforth to the friend of its late master. While accompanying him, it

chanced several times to get a sight of Macaire, and onevery occasion it sprang upon him, and would havestrangled him, had it not been taken off by force. This intense hatred on the part of the animal awakened the suspicion that Macaire had had some share in Aubrey's murder. Charles V., on being informed of the circumstances, wished to satisfy himself of their truth. He caused Macaire and the dog to be confronted, when the animal instantly sprang upon the object of its hatred. The king questioned Macaire closely; but the latter would not admit that he had been in any way connected with Aubrey's murder. Being strongly impressed by a conviction that the behaviour of the dog was grounded on some guilty act of Macaire, the king ordered a combat to take place between the officer and his dumb accuser. This remarkable combat took place in presence of the whole court. The king allowed Macaire to have a strong club, while the only defence allowed to the dog was an empty cask, into which it might retreat if hard pressed. When the combatants appeared, the dog seemed perfectly aware of its situation and duty. For a short time it leaped actively round Macaire, and then, at one spring, fastened itself upon his throat so firmly that he could not disentangle himself. He would have been strangled, had he not cried for mercy and confessed his crime. He was freed from the fangs of the dog only to perish by the hands of the law.

A RIGHT DECISION.

A poor chimney-sweep, who had not enough money to buy himself a dinner, stopped one day before an eatinghouse, and stood regaling his nose with the smell of the victuals. The owner of the shop told him several times

to go away, but the man was unwilling to leave the savoury smell, though unable to purchase the taste. At last the cook came out of the shop, and taking hold of him, declared that, as he had been enjoying the smell of his victuals, he should not go away without paying half the price of a dinner. The fellow said that he neither could nor would pay, and that he would allow the first person who should pass to decide whether the demand was not unreasonable and unjust. A police-officer happening to come up at that moment, the case was referred to him. His decision was as follows: 'My boy. as you have been regaling one of your senses with the odour of this man's meat, it is but just you should make him some payment. Therefore you shall in your turn regale one of his senses, which appears more insatiable than your appetite. Take two pennies between your hands and rattle them loudly.' The boy did so; and the officer, turning to the cook, said: 'Now, sir, I think he has paid you. The smell of your victuals regaled his nostrils, and the sound of his money has tickled your ears.' As may be imagined, the decision gave more satisfaction to the by-standers than to the cook, but it was the only payment he deserved.

THE RUNAWAY RAVEN.

A tailor once had a raven that could say one sentence with great distinctness, but in a very hoarse voice; this sentence was: 'I'll nab you.' Happening to make his escape, the raven flew nearly thirty miles across the country, and took up his abode in one of the chimneys of a castle which, though not very old, had been allowed to become dilapidated, as it was part of a disputed property. A night or two after the raven had

ensconced himself in the chimney, some robbers took refuge in the castle, and began to lay their plans for a plundering expedition, when suddenly the words, 'I'll nab you.' uttered in a sepulchral voice close beside them, sent them rushing in a panic of terror out of the building. After a short time, the dispute as to the possession of the property was decided in favour of one of the litigants, and he sent workmen down to repair the castle. Part of the chimney in which the raven was located being considered insecure, a workman was sent up to report on its When he had got about half-way up, the words, 'I'll nab you,' croaked into his ear, caused him speedily to descend in the greatest consternation. Many of the workmen heard the ominous sounds at various times, but their source could never be discovered; and at last, in the belief that the place was haunted, the men refused to continue the repairs. Being at his wits' end, the owner of the castle advertised, offering a large reward to any one who would discover the source of the annoyance and put the alarming voice to silence. tailor chanced to see the advertisement, and immediately surmised that his runaway raven was the cause of all this commotion. Taking a canvas bag with him, in which to secure the fugitive, he soon made his appearance at the castle. On climbing up the chimney, he was accosted, as the others had been, with the menacing words: 'I'll nab you.' 'I think I'll nab you first, my boy,' said the tailor, seizing him and consigning him to the bag, where he lay quietly enough, having recognised the voice of his old master. On descending, the tailor demanded the promised reward. 'How am I to know that you have really discovered and removed the cause of all this disturbance?' said the gentleman. 'Put your hand into this bag, if you do not believe me,' said the tailor, opening it a little way, but so as not to let him

have a view of its occupant. The gentleman put in his hand, but quickly withdrew it as the angry words, 'I'll nab you,' were growled from the bottom of the raven's throat. He paid the stipulated reward at once, being too glad to get rid of the unwelcome visitant to make any further inquiries.

HALF OF THE PROFIT.

A nobleman who resided near Pisa was about to celebrate his marriage feast. All the elements were propitious except the ocean, which had been so boisterous as to deny the necessary luxury of fish. On the very morning of the feast, however, a poor fisherman made his appearance with a large turbot. He was ushered with his prize into the saloon, where the nobleman, in the presence of his visitors, requested him to put upon it what price he thought proper, and it should be instantly paid him. The fisherman replied: 'One hundred lashes on my bare back is the price of my fish, and I will not bate one strand of whipcord on the bargain.' The nobleman and his guests were not a little astonished; but the seller was resolute, and remonstrance was in vain. At length the nobleman exclaimed: 'Well, the fellow is joking, and the fish we must have; but lay on lightly, and let the price be paid in our presence.' After fifty lashes had been administered—'Hold, hold!' exclaimed the fisherman; 'I have a partner in this business, and it is fitting that he should receive his share.' 'What! are there two such madcaps in the world?' exclaimed the nobleman. 'Name him, and he shall be sent for instantly.' 'You need not go very far for him,' said the fisherman; 'you will find him at your gate, in the shape of your own porter, who would not let me in until I promised that he should have the half of whatever I received for my turbot.' 'Oh, oh!' said the nobleman; 'bring him up instantly: he shall receive his stipulated moiety with the strictest justice.' The lashes being administered, the porter was discharged, and the fisherman handsomely rewarded.

TRUE NOBILITY.

A certain good king had a son who despised his subjects, and thought himself infinitely superior to even those of the most exalted rank. Unfortunately his education had been left to men who had not courage enough to correct his quick and haughty temper, so that he reached the age of manhood with a disposition and opinions which, if he ever came to reign, would be sure to change his faithful subjects into enemies, and lead to rebellion and disaster. The prince at length married a foreign princess and became a father, and the king deemed this a favourable opportunity to give him a lesson on the nobility of birth. For this end, on the morning after his child was born, another infant of the same age and dressed exactly in the same manner was placed in the cradle by its side. The prince on rising went to see his infant heir; but what was his surprise to find two children so exactly alike that he could not distinguish his own! He summoned the servants, and finding them equally embarrassed, he burst into a rage, vowing that they should be instantly discharged and severely punished to boot. Just then his royal father appeared upon the scene, and hearing the objurgations of the prince, he smiled and said: 'How is it possible that you could fail to recognise your own child? Is there any other of such noble blood? Can any other

child resemble him so as to deceive you? Where, then, is your boasted superiority?' Then taking the infant prince in his arms, he said: 'This, my son, is your child; but I should have been unable to distinguish him from the other little innocent myself if I had not taken the precaution to tie a ribbon round his leg. In what, then, I ask you again, consists our superiority to others? It arises only from good conduct and good fortune.' The prince blushed, owned that he was wrong, and promised thereafter to entertain more charitable feelings towards his inferiors. Wishing more forcibly to impress the same lesson on his son, the king ere long took another opportunity of doing so. The prince being ill one day, his physician ordered him to be bled. It so happened that one of the pages of the royal household required to undergo the same operation, and the king ordered the blood to be preserved in separate vessels. few hours after, when his son was with him, the king sent for the doctor, and having ordered the two basins to be brought, desired him to examine the blood and pronounce which was the purer. Pointing to one of the vessels, the physician said: 'This is by far the purer.' Turning to his son, the king added: 'That was taken from the veins of your page. It is purer than yours, doubtless because he lives more simply and obeys the laws of nature. You see, then, that by birth all men are equal: they become nobler in proportion as they improve their minds and make themselves useful to their fellow-men.

A HEROIC FATHER.

The following tragic incident occurred at St Kilda, the inhabitants of which eke out a scanty livelihood by searching for birds among the lofty crags which overlook the sea. A father and two sons went out

together to engage in this perilous occupation, and having firmly attached their rope to the summit of a precipice, descended to the rocks below. Having collected as many birds and eggs as they could carry, they began to ascend by the rope—the elder of the sons first, his brother a fathom or two below him, and the father following last. They had made considerable progress. when the elder son, looking upwards, perceived the strands of the rope grinding against a sharp edge of rock and slowly giving way. He at once made known the alarming fact. 'Will it hold till we reach the top?' asked the father. 'It will not hold another minute,' was the reply. 'Will it bear the weight of one of us?' said the father. 'It is as much as it can do,' replied the son; 'but even that is doubtful.' 'There is then at least a chance of one of us being saved; draw your knife, and cut away below!' was the cool and intrepid order of the heroic father. 'Exert yourself-you may yet escape, and live to support and comfort your mother!' There was no time for discussion or further hesitation. The son looked up once more, but the edge of rock was cutting its way through, and the rope was almost severed. The knife was drawn; the rope was cut; and the father and younger son were launched into eternity.

THE HEROIC PILOT.

A fine American paddle-ship was ploughing her way through the sparkling waters of Lake Erie. The pilot at the wheel was a bluff, weather-beaten sailor, known from one end of the lake to the other as 'Honest John Maynard.' When about ten miles from land, smoke was seen issuing from the hold. One of the hands was ordered to descend and report as to its origin. On

returning he exclaimed: 'The hold's on fire. Part of the baggage and the sides of the vessel are in a smouldering flame.' Passengers and crew were at once formed into two lines on each side of the ship, and buckets of water passed and re-passed, were dashed upon the burning mass. For a few moments it seemed as if the flames were subdued; but on raising the hatches, the free ingress of air but fanned the glowing timbers. 'How's her head?' shouted the captain. 'West-sou'-west, sir,' answered Maynard. 'Keep her sou'-and-by-west,' cried the captain; 'we must run ashore anywhere.' Owing to the direction of the wind and the speed of the vessel, the flames and smoke spread aft, and the women and children were ordered to the bow. The engineer put on all steam; water was thrown on the sails to make them hold the wind; and the ship went tearing on at twenty knots an hour. Though cut off from the crew by a sheet of smoke and flames, the brave pilot stuck to his post, guiding the vessel to the nearest projecting land. The heat grew insufferable; the engineers fled from the engine-room; the passengers clustered round the prow; the sailors sawed planks on which to lash the women; and the boldest passengers were preparing themselves for a last life-struggle by divesting themselves of their outer garments. The signal of distress flew from the masthead; the friendly shore, now not more than a mile away, grew more distinct, and boats were seen putting off to their assistance. 'Can you hold on five minutes longer, John?' cried the captain. 'By God's help, I'll try, sir!' was the answer, heard above the roaring of the flames by which he was now almost surrounded. Still he holds on, and his heroic determination wavers not. It was enough for him to hear the sailors cheer the approaching boats, and the captain cry: 'The women and children first; then every man for himself, and God for us all!'

These were the last words that reached his ear. How he perished was never exactly known. Whether, dizzied by the smoke, he lost his footing in endeavouring to come forward, and fell overboard, or whether he was suffocated, his comrades could not tell. As the keel of the vessel grated on the beach, the boats clustered round the burning hulk. Passengers, sailors, and captain leaped into them, or swam for their lives; and all, save he to whose heroic endurance they owed their deliverance, safely reached the shore.

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